

NEW

PC action

BRITAIN'S BRIGHTEST PC GAMES MAGAZINE

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to San Francisco
and Las Vegas

STARLORD

Can it really take you to
gaming heaven?

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or a misfit

TFX the definitive flight sim:
we tell you why

ELITE II the inside story

CD ROM

has the
revolution begun?

AL LOWE talks of
life, love and
Leisure Suit Larry

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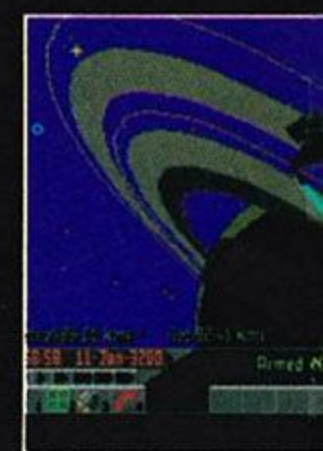
ISSUE 1 DECEMBER 1993 UK £3.95

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Look ahead. Look far, far ahead to the
year 3200 and imagine a basic space craft
as your only worthwhile possession. If you
are to fulfil your burning ambition to be the
best, you must defeat the best by coupling
your inherited flying skills with a vast
knowledge of the Universe. Outwit the
pirates by beating them at their own game.
Be merciless, be wise, beware.



PC Screen shot



AMIGA Screen shot

DA
BRA
PRES

FRONT

ELITE

 **KONAMI**

1985 — ELITE

"Elite. Game? It's a way of life!"

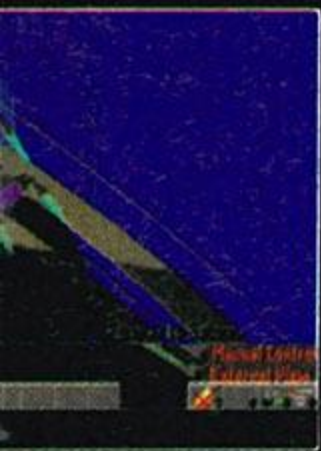
Personal Computer World magazine



only the very best

Available on PC,

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h shot



PC Screen shot

VID BEN ENTS

FRONTIER

TE I

Intergalactic trading has its rewards and its
downfalls. Trade with the international stock
markets and play one against the other to
get the best deal. Watch your back at all
times. Adding to your bank balance could
well be adding to your criminal record!
The Feds may or may not like what you do.
Tough! They will have to catch you first.
In a galaxy full of challenges, –
this Frontier has no limits.

GAMETEK

▶ 1993 - FRONTIER - ELITE II

**"The ultimate in space adventure,
Frontier is the single most important step forward
for games this decade."**

CU Amiga – 97%

mature with time

AMIGA, ATARI ST

y Konami. Distributed by Gametek

THE ST IS IN DEEP DECLINE, THE AMIGA HAS REACHED ITS
PEAK AND THE CONSOLES REMAIN
A MARKET OF THEIR VERY OWN.
COMPUTERS ARE WHERE THE GROWTH MARKET LIES AND
PC ACTION IS HERE TO SATISFY THAT NICHE.



**CLOSETED IN
PERSONAL**
SHARON GREAVES EDITOR

WHETHER YOU
SIMULATIONS,



FEAST ON A RICH DIET OF
OR YOUR INTEREST GRAVITATES

FIONA HOWARTH ART EDITOR

TOWARDS ROLE-PLAYING EXTRAVAGANZAS OR GRAPHIC
ADVENTURES, PC ACTION WILL
LATEST REPORTS OF THE VERY

JIM EAGERS DEPUTY ART EDITOR



BRING YOU THE
BEST SOFTWARE



ON THE MARKET - PAST, PRESENT AND
FUTURE. PC ACTION WILL ALSO REVEAL THE

PAUL MCNALLY DEPUTY EDITOR

CREATIVITY BEHIND THE GAMES SOFTWARE THROUGH
BACKROOM STORIES AND INTERVIEWS.

THE ADVENT OF THE CD ROM AND THE ALMOST
TANGIBLE REALITY OF MULTIMEDIA ONLY SERVE

STEVE WHITE GAMES REVIEWER



TO CLARIFY THE FACT THAT A STEP TOWARDS THE FUTURE

HAS ALREADY
RIGHT THERE

KAREN LEVY PRODUCTION EDITOR



BEEN TAKEN. AND PC ACTION IS
AT THE CENTRE OF THIS NEW

ERA. A PERFECT ACCOMPANIMENT FOR THE GAMES
MACHINE OF THE '90s, AND BEYOND



BRAM STOKER'S
Dracula™

**THE CURSE OF DRACULA IS UPON YOU
DEFEAT HIM OR DIE**

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Can Harker outpace the hordes of undead that haunt the mystical and cruel 19th Century Transylvania? Hold your breath as he steps quietly along the ancient halls. Watch in terror as he runs screaming through the graveyard pursued by legions of hideous creatures all craving after one thing - the blood of a living human.

**DRACULA IS ON YOUR PC NOW.
COMING SOON FOR AMIGA, PC CD, ALL SEGA PLATFORMS, ALL NINTENDO PLATFORMS.**

PSYGNOSIS

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ACTION**

GB ACTION

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THE WORD

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David Braben, creator of Elite, takes time out to talk of the sequel to, arguably, the most inspirational game of all time



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Al Lowe, the man who put the oo-er into the video games world, defends allegations of sexism as he speaks of the sources behind Leisure Suit Larry



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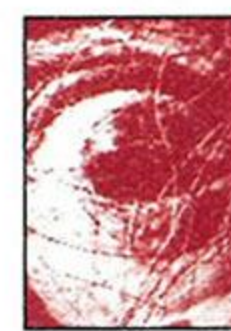
As multi player games begin to burgeon, **On-Line Entertainment** aims to change the way people see their computer. The Interactive European Community opens its doors...



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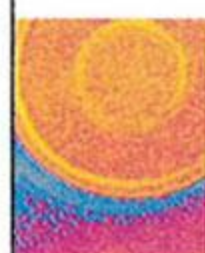
Take a peek behind the scenes and hear what games developers have to say about their upcoming creations. This month: **Inferno**, **Innocent**, **Klik 'n' Play** and **MegaRace**



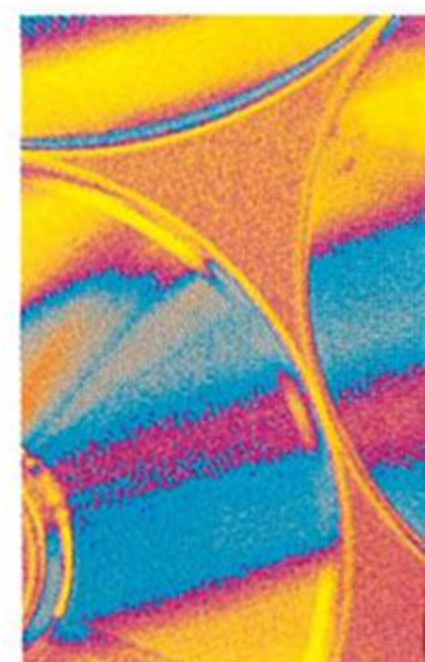
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If you've come to an impasse with a game and just can't make head or tail of what to do or where to go, then just write to the doctor - **the all knowing oracle**



**'as a generic format
it is inevitable that
CD will succeed'**



TFX, a flight sim
brought straight
into the '90s
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StarLord

Experience an intergalactic adventure through time and space. Begin to trade/attack with expertise and your rise to the upper echelons of a futuristic society is guaranteed

Christmas Lemmings

When Yuletide festivities step up the pace, it's time for our cutesy rodent friends to do their damndest to top themselves. Only you, persuasive saviour, can direct them to a safe haven



'...is CD-Rom a revolution in the making — or is it just hype?' 21

The 7th guest. Maybe this will become the benchmark by which future CD-Rom games will measure themselves 21



Software
PC

HOW TO USE YOUR COVERDISKS

New beginnings: If you know a little bit about your PC then it is unlikely you will need this column. If, however, you are one of the countless new users who don't know your DOS from your doormat then please read the following carefully before starting to play with your coverdisks. If you do encounter any problems you can always give us a call on the PC Action Coverdisk Helpline. You can find the number at the bottom of this page so ring us and we'll do our best to help you out. And rest assured that all our cover disks are stringently checked for viruses.

Copying disks: It's one of the simplest operations you will ever have to perform. Generally speaking, and we will tell you when there are exceptions, you will always have to copy the contents of your coverdisks onto your hard drive. Naturally enough you should first ensure that you have enough space on your machine to carry out the copying correctly. You'll be told if you do not have enough room, but it is a lot of hassle and extremely irritating if you have to keep stopping. Also remember that sometimes a demo will be crunched or made smaller in order to fit on the disk. When you copy it across it may expand, so make sure you have plenty of space to spare by deleting files.

Copying instructions for each demo can be found in the magazine pages but as a general overview this is roughly the kind of thing you'll be expected to do before starting up a demo (an example is in the brackets):

1. Make a new folder on your hard drive (**MD PCA**).
2. Change to your disk drive (**A:**)
3. Copy the contents of the coverdisk to hard drive:
(**copy *.* c:\PCA**)
4. Change back to your hard drive (**C:**)
5. Uncrunch the demo (see individual instructions for help).
6. Play the game.

Making backups: If you're safety conscious you may wish to make a back-up copy of your coverdisk. Very few people actually get around to doing this but there can be tears if someone comes along and leaves the disk next to the monitor and corrupts it. Duplicating the PC Action demo disk couldn't be simpler as the disk is always regular format.

Find a disk you wish to use as your backup. If it is already formatted then so much the better. If it isn't, pop it in the drive and type **Format A:** (or whatever your drive is called). Wait until the disk is completed and then you are ready to make your back-up. Type in **DISKCOPY A: A:** and you will be prompted at regular intervals to swap your disk until the whole thing is finished. Please note that before you undertake using your coverdisk you should always make sure that you have write-protected it that is, so that you can see through the hole.

Troubleshooting: PC Action are proud to announce their Coverdisk Helpline. This service is here to specifically help you with any problems you may have with our coverdisk. Simply give us a call and we will endeavour to solve your worries. Please note the Helpline is only in operation on a Wednesday afternoon between 3 and 5 pm. If you can't get through please keep trying. The number to call is **0625 859675**.

If there is a fault with the disk itself you can obtain a replacement by posting it to:

PC Action faulty disks
T.I.B. House,
11 Edward Street,
Bradford,
BD4 7BH

STARLORD

This is the first of many great coverdisks to come from PC Action and features a top quality demo of this month's cover-review Starlord. The game is going to be so big we just had to get it on this month. Don't forget to take a look at the review elsewhere in the issue too!

Unfortunately the demo is one and a half megs big so we've had to crunch it to squeeze it on. Simply typing **INSTALL** will run the program but if you have any problems follow the procedure below. You will need a 386 or greater to play the demo properly

C:
MD Stardem
A (or B):
Copy *.* c:\stardem
C:
CD Stardem
PKUNZIP Stardem.Zip
Slidesho

minimum loading requirements

MINIMUM MEMORY 570K	MINIMUM HARD DISK 1-2 MB
MINIMUM PROCESSOR 386	MINIMUM GRAPHICS VGA
MINIMUM SPEED 16MHz	SOUND CARDS Adlib, Roland, SoundBlaster
INSTALLATION Essential	CONTROLS Keyboard, Joystick, Mouse

LEMMINGS

The second PC Action coverdisk this month comes from Psygnosis. Holiday Lemmings is here to get you into the mood for all your Christmas shopping. Four exclusive levels of the new puzzler from DMA Design are all yours to attempt to complete as you prepare to have your brain teased to the limit. The control system is the same as the classic Lemmings. The new Lemmings found in the sequel are not here this time.

Holiday Lemmings will be in the shops any day now and there'll be plenty of new levels to test you in that package.

A: (or B: depending on your drive name)
Install
Follow the on-screen prompts
Type Lemmings to run the demo
Any other time you wish to play type in:
CD Lemmings
CD Holiday
Lemmings

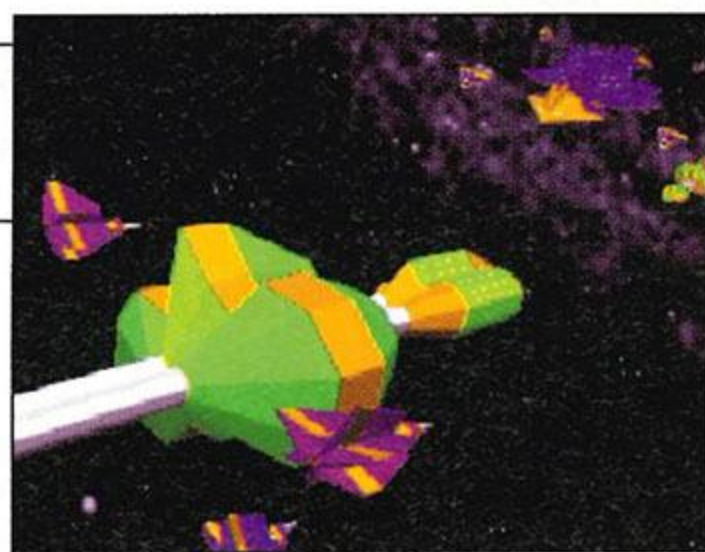
minimum loading requirements

MINIMUM MEMORY 570K	MINIMUM HARD DISK 1-2 MB
MINIMUM PROCESS 286	MINIMUM GRAPHICS VGA
MINIMUM SPEED 16MHz	SOUND CARDS Adlib, Roland
INSTALLATION Essential	CONTROLS Keyboard, Mouse

The views can be flicked between by tapping the F keys. F1 will always bring you back to the cockpit.

Install the game correctly and it will have unzipped itself and upon executing the final command will enter Slideshow mode. Here you'll be treated to a selection of prime screenshots to give you a taster of what the finished game will look like. Once you've been taken through the game you'll be dropped straight into 3D Real-Time combat mode for you to try the game out for yourself.

Don't worry if at this stage everything seems a little confusing. Lots of ships will appear to be flying around with no real objective. You've actually been placed right in the middle of battle so it's time to start earning your pay as a pilot. You take control of a Starlord's fleet as they battle against a horde of enemy fighters. Destroy them to win.



Before we go into any further detail here are a few important keys to remember as the game goes on.

F1 - Current HUD view which locks on to current target.

F2-F9 - Change action views

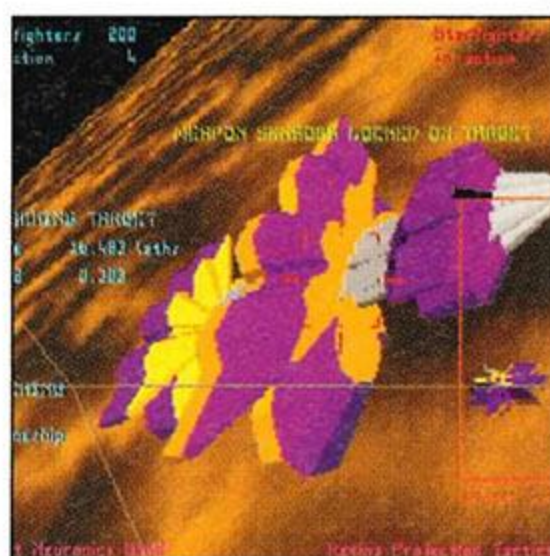
M - Toggles between Autopilot and Manual modes

Keypad +/- : In F1 it cycles through available targets

Enter: Locks autopilot on to target and fires when within range.

Space-bar : In Manual mode this toggles the lasers on or off.

P : Turns planet off to increase speed.



Closing in on the enemy. Now it's just a case of unleashing your firepower onto him.

COVERDISK 1

Obviously this Starlord demo doesn't give you any idea about the strategy involved in the game. This is purely the fighting section (which can be turned off in the finished product).

If you'd rather just sit back and admire the graphics, simply leaving the game in autopilot mode will perform that trick. Careful observation at this stage may well give you some useful pointers for the future. If you want to play properly just get the targets in your sights, lock on and blast away which sounds a lot easier than it actually is.

For the full effect of the demo you should regularly change the views. This provides an impressive array of fly-bys. If your machine begins to struggle with the number of objects on the screen at any one time, simply tap the P button to remove the fractal planet landscape. This will speed things up considerably.



A collection of Starlords all ready to vie for the position of Emperor or Empress of the entire galaxy

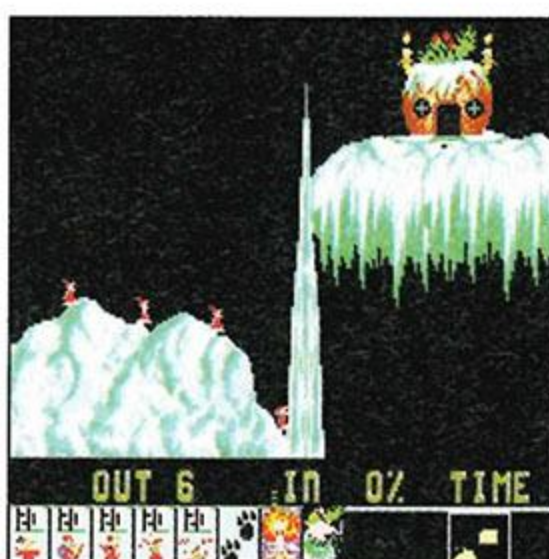
We're sure you'll agree that Starlord is one of the most visually impressive games to date and that it is well worth the extra two minutes it takes to unpack the game. Don't forget if you have any problems you can call the PC Action Coverdisk Helpline at the times mentioned opposite or if you prefer you can simply drop us a letter explaining your problem, or maybe even just let us know what you think of the disks. Happy blasting. Now turn to the reviews section to read about the game.

PUBLISHER	MicroProse	CONTACT	0454 329 510
PRICE	£44.99	RELEASE DATE	October

COVERDISK 2

EXCLUSIVE! They're lemming on a jet plane and heading right your way in the very first issue of PC Action. Zingier than a dash of lemming and lime and tastier than a slice of lemming meringue pie, the cutesy green frocked rodents just can't give you enough gaming delights.

Lemmings, the innovative game pioneered by DMA Design and software publisher Psygnosis, has been a forerunner when it comes to puzzlers, and amusing ones at that.



Closing in on the Chrimbo pud, the quest is almost over

Lemmings 2, heralded as more of the same but with its own bizarre flavour not to mention heightened level of difficulty, did what sequels all too often fail to do and that is to live up to high expectations.

In the interim, data disks and special Christmas versions of the game have been pouring out of computer game emporiums to keep the momentum flowing – and 1993, you'll be glad to hear, will be no exception.

Now dressed in red Santa Claus frocks and dealing with the likes of nasty snow men and Christmas puddings, the no-hoping critters make their precarious

Dig that Lemming man! He's going to be the saviour this time around



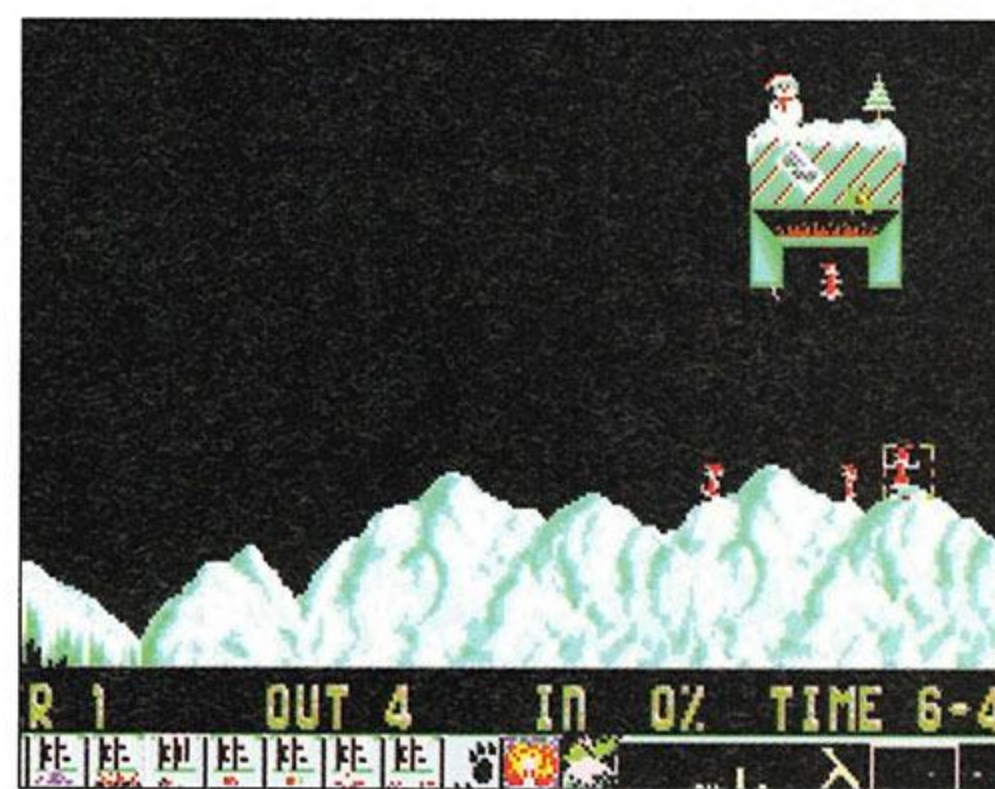
way from one cliff top to the next with you, guiding saviour that you are, controlling their every movement, good, bad or indifferent.

The demo itself on the cover of PC Action contains four playable levels of Christmas Lemmings.

These entail different snowy 'scapes to trog over and also a variety of tricks to be pulled from out of your sleeves to make a killing or not.

The rodents are no lovers of bungee jumping so you'll have the usual array of controls to access, ie make a Lemming into a blocker, climber, digger, blower upper, etc.

To get a little taster of the Christmas Lemmings game, put the demo disk into

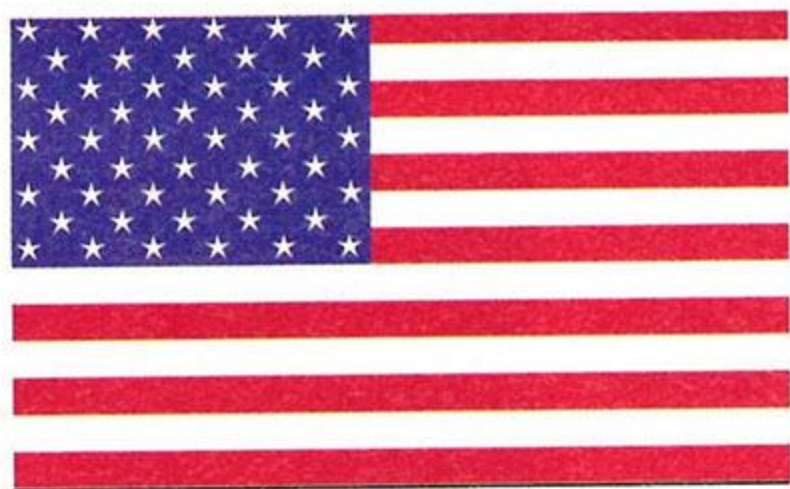


Dressed in Santa outfits, the little rodents set out over perilous ground

the disk drive, type INSTALL and the game will then load itself. Note: On lower spec PCs you may need to turn the music off on level one to run the program smoothly.

PUBLISHER	Psygnosis	CONTACT	051-709 5755
PRICE	£19.99	RELEASE DATE	October

COMPETITION



*Try your luck in Vegas –
gambling centre of the world*

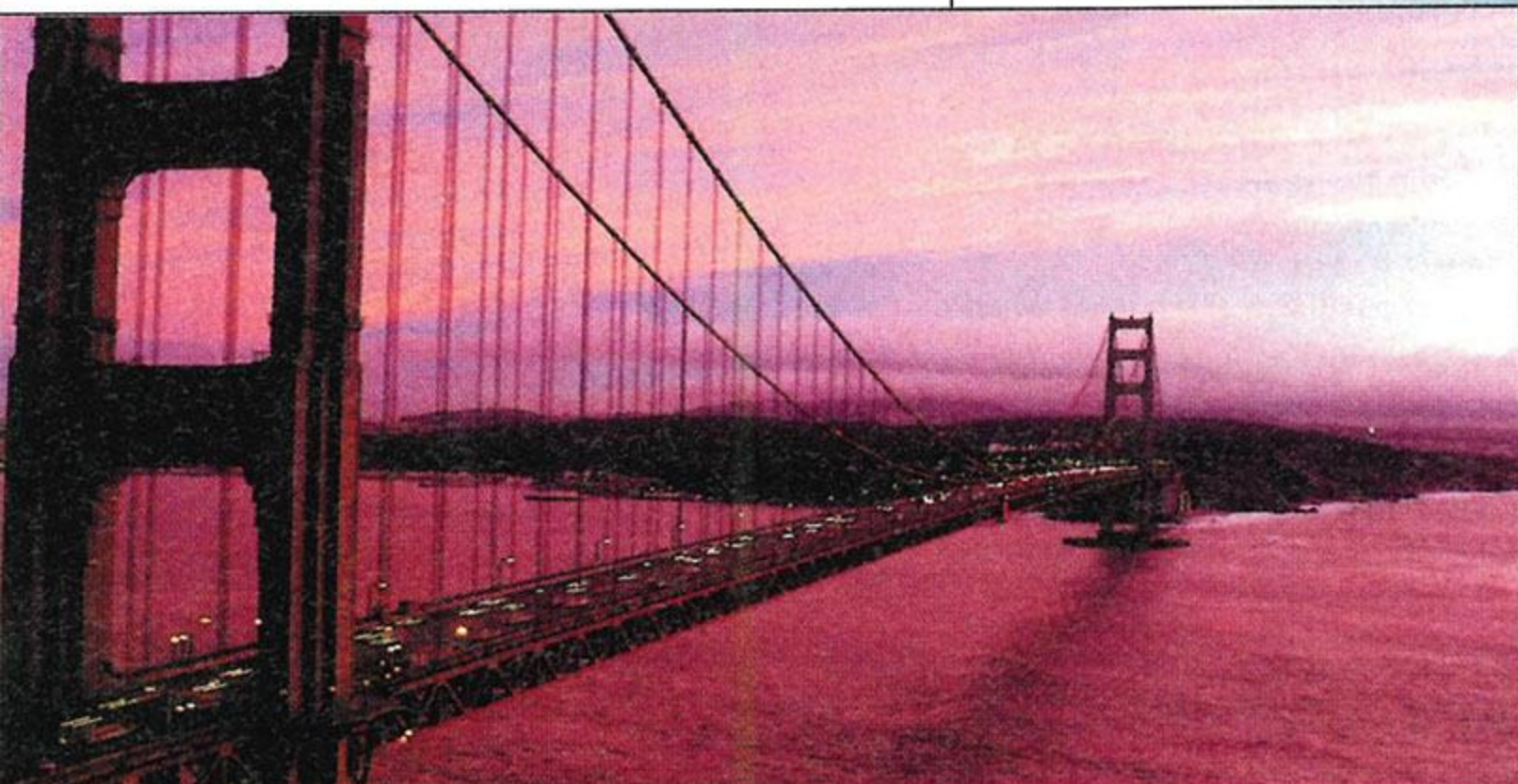


Live the American

**Plus ten runner-up prizes
of top Electronic Arts
games**



*Enjoy the sights of
San Francisco*



When Christmas is over and all you have to look forward to is a long spell of winter weather, how do you fancy getting away from it all on the trip of a lifetime? Here at PC Action we have hit on the ideal antidote for those January blues with this fantastic launch issue competition run in conjunction with top PC games house Electronic Arts.

The winner and one guest will be jetting off to warmer climes and will be treated to an all expenses paid behind-the-scenes look at the professional world of big business which supports the computer games industry.

Tucking the cash prize of £500 spending money into your pocket you will fly out from Manchester airport on January 5 via Chicago to Las Vegas, Nevada where you will be the guests of PC Action at the plush Flamingo Hilton.

Along with PC Action publisher Rita Keane and editor Sharon Greaves, you will visit the 1994 International Winter Consumer Electronics Show at the Las Vegas Convention Centre – the world's largest trade fair devoted to consumer electronic products. CES will have 1,600 exhibitors who will be showing their wares to 80,000 trade visitors and 2,000 journalists from over a total of 87 countries. And seeing the products of tomorrow will be a unique experience for you since CES is not open to members of the general public. But that's not all. On January 9 you will take off again, leaving the arid Nevada Desert for the balmy weather of San Francisco and the Residence Inn, San Mateo. Here, the highlight of your three day stay will be a trip to Silicon Valley, the home of America's computer world. With a conducted tour of the Electronic Arts headquarters you will not only see the latest games under development, but also a look behind the scenes of some of the world's most successful PC titles.

After plenty of time for sightseeing and with a last look at the famous Golden Gate bridge it will be time to leave San Francisco on January 12 for the return flight via Chicago to Manchester.

And if you're not lucky enough to win the American trip, you could be one of ten runners-up who will each receive their own choice of a top Electronic Arts game.

So how do you win this fantastic trip of a lifetime or even the mouth watering software?

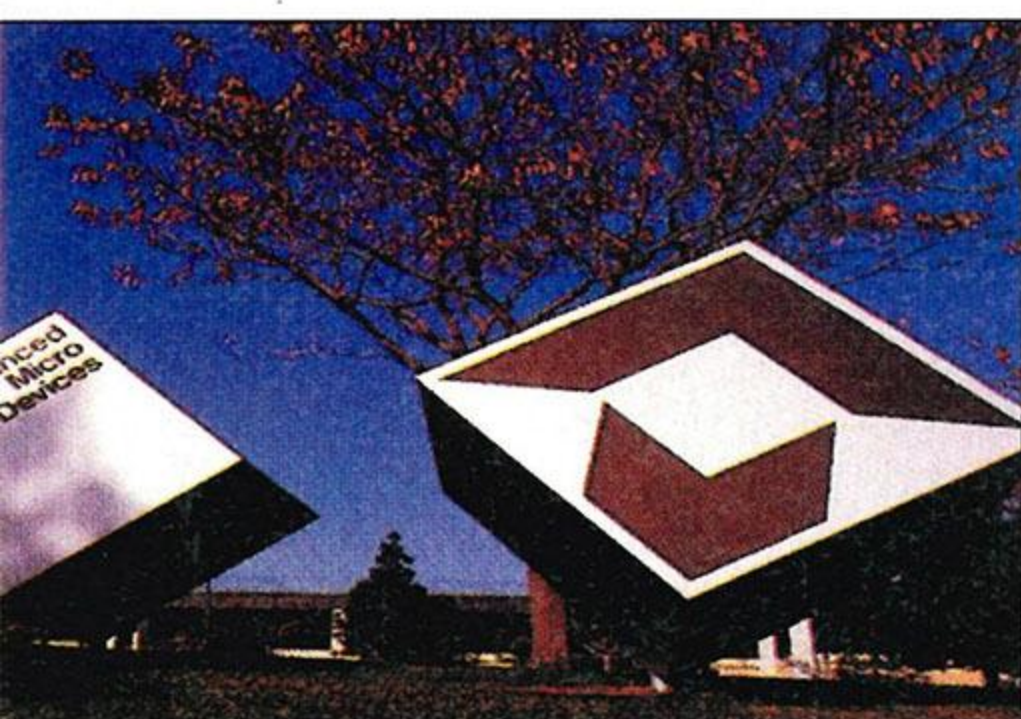
It's simple. Just answer the eight USA-related questions on the right. Then take the initial letters of each of your answers and arrange them into the name of a US state. Fill in the coupon and return it to us. Entrants and accompanying guest must be 18 years old or over. Photocopies accepted, but no multiple entries.



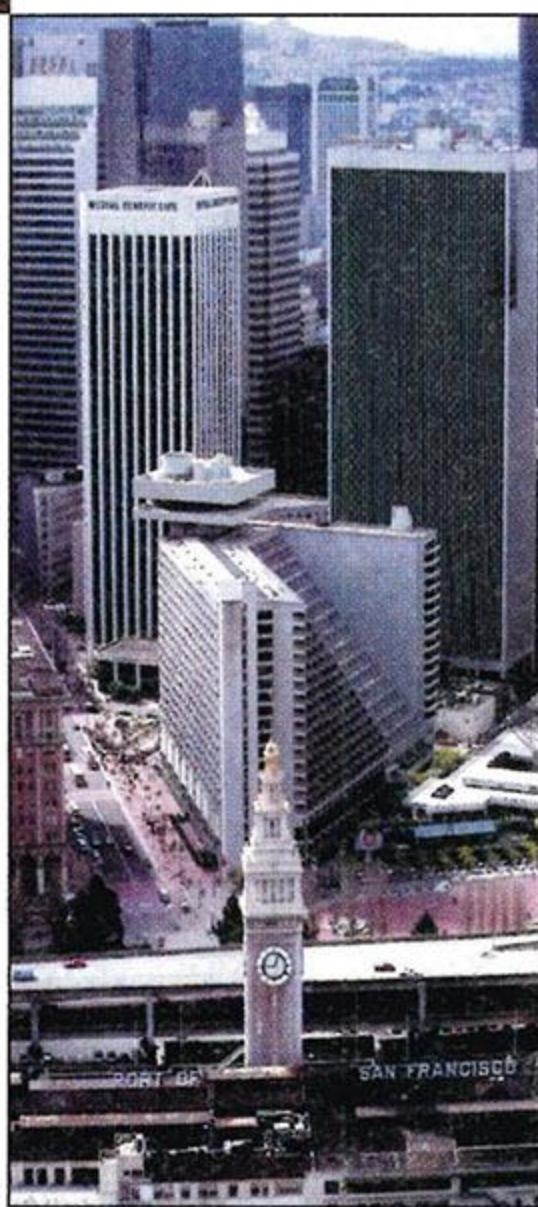


Look into the future at the giant CES

dream *with the trip of a lifetime*



Rub shoulders with big business in Silicon Valley



What is the capital city of the USA?

Which American poet and essayist had the Christian names Ralph Waldo?

Which American state is know as "The Cotton State" ?

What was the middle name of US president Franklin Roosevelt?

O'Neill was an American playwright. What was his Christian name?

In which American city were the 1932 Olympic Games held?

Which Nevada town is the home of the quickie divorce?

What is the state capital of Georgia?

The American state hidden in the above answers is:

Entries must arrive no later than first post on November 28.

Send this entry form to: Trip of a Lifetime, PC Action, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP.

Name

Age

Address

Postcode

Employees of Europress may not enter this competition. Neither can their families. The editor's decision is final and no correspondence shall be entered into.



WHAT THE 'EXPERTS' THINK ABOUT **STRIKER**

SNES FORCE

AUG 1993

'Striker is more than just the most comprehensive soccer sim to date, it's a dream come true'

SUPER ACTION

AUG 1993

'The best football game I've ever played . . . on any other format'

JULIAN RIGNALL

'A really brilliant sports simulation, football fans are going to go mad about it'

SUPER PLAY

AUG 1993

'It's absolutely brilliant. It's hard to imagine a more enjoyable footy game than Striker'

C.&V.G.

AUG 1993

'Enjoyable, competitive and totally brilliant in every conceivable way'

TOTAL

AUG 1993

'The best football game, in fact, the best sports game. It's brilliant fun and simple without being basic. An instant classic'

STRIKER



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LIVERPOOL L20 8LZ. TEL: 051-933 2688. FAX: 051-933 2462

THE WORD

Far Right (top): Max enters a grotesquely twisted world

Far Right (bottom): The partners prepare for some heavy interrogations

Below Right: The duo's investigation goes from car lot to caravan

Play it again Sam

Following LucasArts' incredible Day of the Tentacle, the team behind such classics as Monkey Island and Indiana Jones Fate Of Atlantis look set to push their innovative style even further.

Sam and Max Hit the Road is the result – an adventure game based on the popular US Sam & Max Freelance Police comic books created by Steve Purcell. Sam and Max are a dog and a rabbit, operating under the pretence of protecting society while secretly having a ball.

The world into which they lead us is a distorted vision of modern day life; everything looks familiar yet has a definite twist to it. Purcell himself has been significantly involved in the development of the video game in a bid to retain the overall feel of this absurdist universe.

The story follows the adventurers on their investigative journey to track down a missing sasquatch called Bruno the Bigfoot who has disappeared from the local carnival along with his girlfriend Trixie Giraffe Necked Woman!

Hand in glove with the traditional LucasArts humour and mind twisting puzzles will also be a selection of mini games that were conceived in the early days of production and felt to be distracting enough to incorporate into the overall plan.

One major advancement in this game lies within the SCUMM interface. Beloved in all previous LucasArts adventures, it's now been significantly tweaked to introduce an all icon, no verb interface. Steve Purcell describes the game as having 'a real edge to it that adults will appreciate while kids will like the cartoony look and wild terrain.' It'll be available for PC and CD-Rom before Christmas and is to be released under the US Gold label.



'The material ranks between Indy Jones and Waiting For Godo when translating it into a game'

SEAN CLARK PROJECT
LEADER ON SAM AND MAX

EA are to release Pacific Strike, a game that follows on from Strike Commander while still employing the same revolutionary Realspace engine and cinematic sequences. Equally as compelling will be the variety of aircraft to fly: Wildcat fighters, torpedo bombers and Hellcat dive bombers. Action begins with the Japanese attack on the US Navy at Pearl Harbour and then spreads over a diverse range of terrains.

Strolling scrolls

Fantasy role-playing is becoming increasingly more realistic and horrifying as developers ameliorate their PC engines and concentrate on greater player intervention.

In the opening chapter of The Elder Scrolls, subtitled The Arena, Bethesda Softworks are aiming for great depth of gameplay as you cast yourself back to 1896, to a land of rising passions where evil ridden folk are plotting against the Throne.

There'll be over 400 different areas to explore, monsters, a vast array of magical items and a limitless amount of spells, to name but a few of the in-game features, and the action itself will be fought in real time. The Elder Scrolls will be distributed under the US Gold label before the festive season.



Psygnosis's Hired Guns hopes to introduce a whole new dimension to the role-playing format. This truly unique game enables four players to simultaneously play on one machine at any time. So as well as getting your friends to help you with the game's main campaign mission, you can also try and blow them away in a frantic shoot-out on one of the short action game levels. Psygnosis have promised over 1.2 Mb of soundtracks, an on-line inventory encyclopedia, auto-mapping, and a truly massive play area. Due out for release in November.

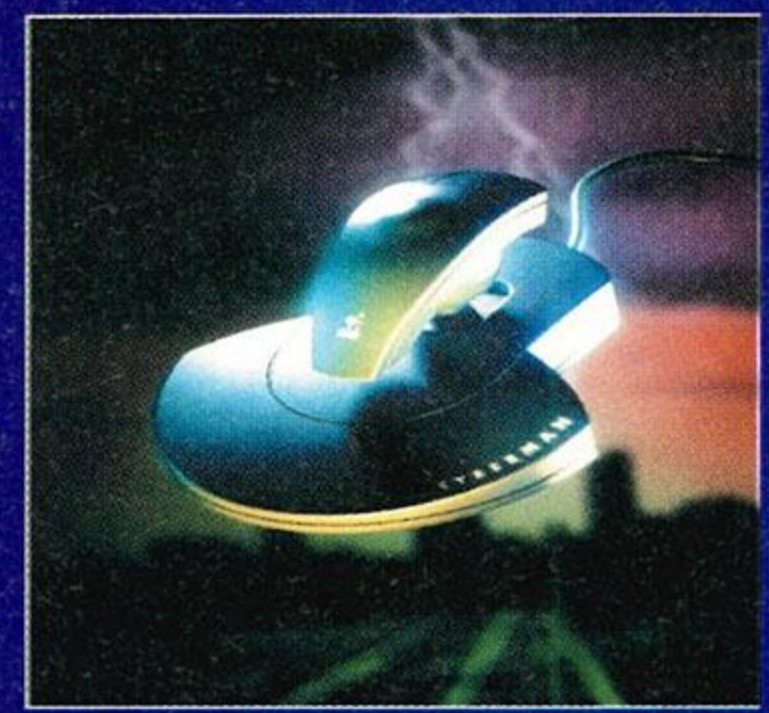


Welcome to the cyberman

Gimmick controllers have done the rounds before now, but generally the best devices still remain the simplest ones. Perhaps it's time for a change now as Logitech launch their Cyberman 3D Controller.

It's a beautifully crafted looking piece of equipment and has a couple of unusual features. The design gives it a futuristic look and feel, especially when playing RPGs and other such games. To quote the guys at Logitech, 'It gives direct dimensional control previously only available through a combination of keyboard and mouse'.

Perhaps the most novel feature though is that of the sensory circuits which relate to what's happening in the game. Called Tactile Feedback, get ready to be amazed and prepare yourself for the impact as the stick starts vibrating when you collide with a wall. Still on the subject of joystick handling, Spectravideo are to push the PC Commander into the fray. Retailing for £25.99, the joystick will have PC, XT and AT compatibility, independent autofire controls and two microswitched fire buttons.



Right: The game interface in The Elder Scrolls takes on the traditional RPG look

Centre: A 3D perspective heightens the feel of really 'being there'

Far Right: Exterior locations bring you into contact with all manner of strange creatures

WORD

The Devil rides out

It's certainly been a long time coming but Gremlin's arcade adventure game, *Lilil Devil* is now very near to completion.

Lilil Devil is set in an ancient land known as the Underworld where, once a year the monotony of life is broken by the annual meeting of the Grand Council in the Chamber of the Ancients.

You take control of Mutt, a little Devil obsessed with sleeping and one thoroughly annoyed with the Grand Council for disturbing his rest. But this is no ordinary gathering of the Council for they will be deciding who will be chosen to enter the Overworld, through the Labyrinth of Chaos and bring back the Mystic Pizza of Plenty!

Only one Devil can take the journey and he is chosen through a process of psyching out the others present. Needless to say, Mutt wins and is sent off into the unknown.

Graphically, *Lilil Devil* promises much but as to how the game shapes up we'll just have to wait and see. It will set you back £39.99 when released sometime in November.



Far Right: The guy responsible for the graphics in *Lilil Devil* is Alan Batson who used to work for Walt Disney

Far Right: *Lilil Devil* is a 3D-isometric arcade adventure set in the Underworld

Digital Intergration are to release their first scenario disk for *Tornado* come November, priced £25.99. Entitled *Operation Desert Storm*, it'll be packed with a host of new 3D objects and desert style scenery as you transport yourself to the Gulf warzone

Not just a flight sim, but an air combat simulator! This is Mindscape's offering under the guise of *Evasive Action*, a realistic action flight game featuring plenty of 3D and more than enough pure dogfighting. Based around four different scenarios, a more unusual feature will be the split screen mode which allows two players to participate simultaneously. Due for launch in December. Pilot's licence optional

Well 'ard Mortal Monday's been and gone on the console front but *Mortal Kombat* is now looking to bloody a few PC screens as well. As a beat'em-up, it's got the pace, the beefy contestants and arcade action so hot as to melt your teeth caps. Due to be released by Virgin in November

Dungeon Master, originally released back in 1987, really did work wonders for the resculpting of player perspective RPGs. Its aptly titled sequel *Dungeon Master II: The Legend of Skullkeep*, produced by Interplay, doesn't just promise more of the same, but goes one better. It's aiming to hit a higher note on the scale of realism by running in real time and concentrating on greater interactivity between characters. This will be most notable with enemy characters that are no longer mere automatons but exist in a world in which every action performed elicits a reaction, adverse or otherwise, from them.

Championship Manager, first released in 1992 and updated in '93 to include all league and player names, better scouts, foreign players and pre-season transfers, is set to welcome the '94 season data disk into its dressing room.

Heavily statistic based and a game of pure unashamed management, the all-time number one in the multi-format charts is limbering up for yet another hat trick. Retailing for £9.99, the season disk is available from Domark

Lovingly crafted

South America in the 1920s and the voodoo legends manifest themselves, filling the dense nights with alien creatures and events that lie unaccounted for.

Potions are mixed and wax dolls moulded before being taken to the altar for sacrificial ceremonies. Into this world of black magic Edward Carnby, the star of the revolutionary *Alone in the Dark*, must venture – still alone.

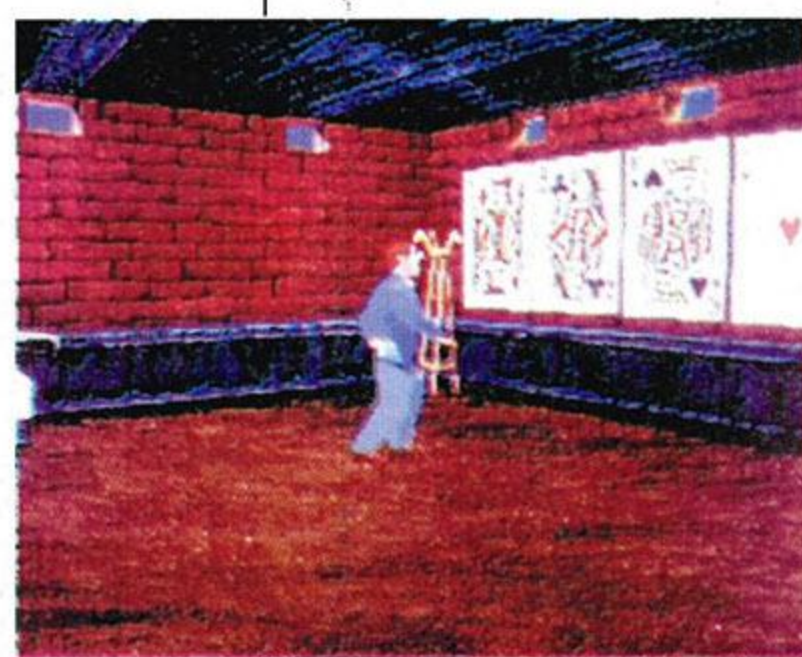
Forced to mingle and struggle with manifold evil presences, his task is to make his mark in a game that promises to hold much tension and manifold surprises.

But can *Alone in the Dark 2* really better its forefather in terms of tension and innovatory techniques? Well, the signs are certainly promising.

For starters, action is four times faster, the gamesplaying arena is three times larger and the quality of the animation has also been significantly improved, even to the extent of animating backgrounds that usually tend to lie dormant.

The monsters will possess an intelligence of their own, while Carnby moves more rationally and smoothly. He needs to, what with up to four enemies on screen at any one time. Rather than the player being given the option to play either a male or female protagonist, about halfway through the game you assume the role of a little girl. As such you are obliged to solve puzzles from a child's eye perspective, putting a new slant on affairs.

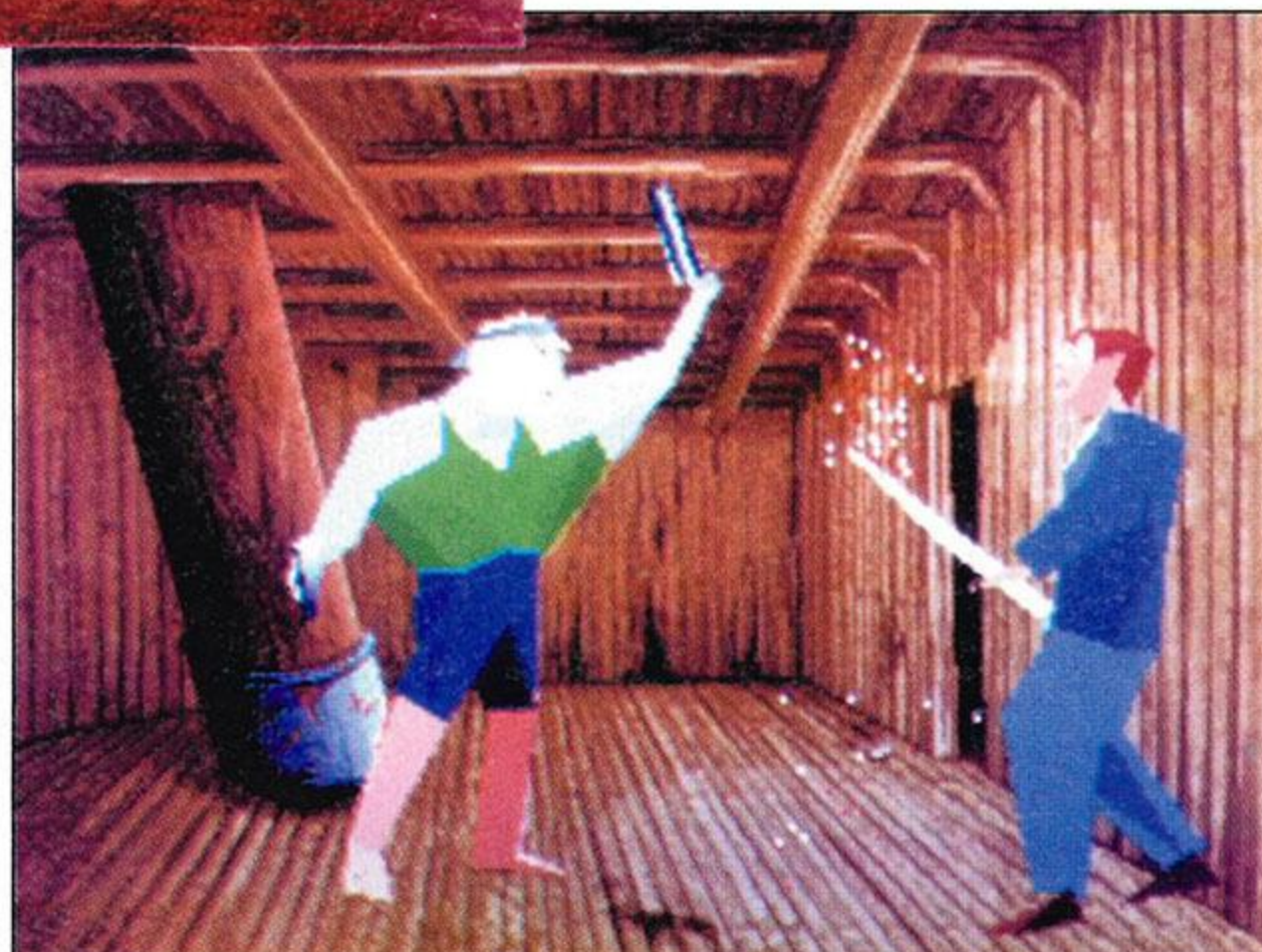
Set for a mid November release by Infogrames, *Alone in the Dark 2* is careful to remedy the quibbles of its predecessor while still recreating and expanding on all its noteworthy trademarks.



Above: Throughout, a recurring card game focuses your attention

Far Right: Carnby roams around the building, on the search for weapons

Right: On the deck of the ship a battle with a pirate commences. There can be only one victor in this game



WORD

A Revolution in the making

Beneath a Steel Sky is the latest adventure game to come from the reputable stable of Virgin and boasts a development team never before assembled on a computer game.

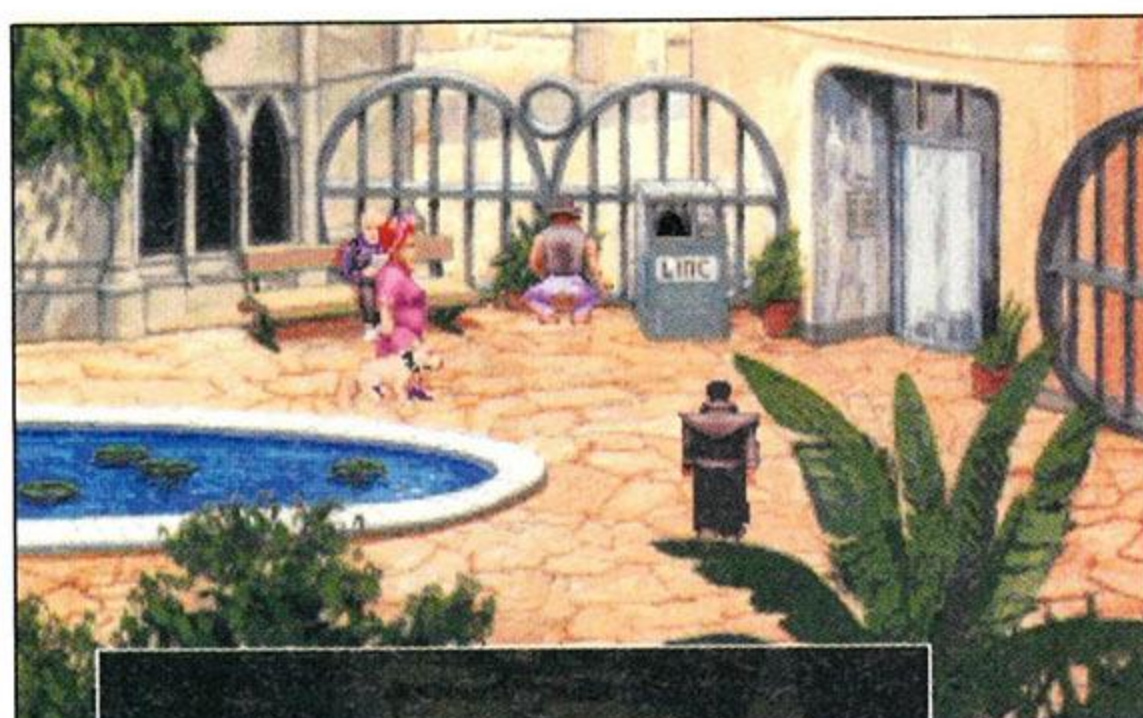
Responsible for the sumptuous graphics and backgrounds is Dave Gibbons, renowned artist of such projects as Watchmen and Give me Liberty while the team who created Lure of the Temptress, Revolution, are responsible for the code. Beneath a Steel Sky is set in the not too distant future where the world is ruled over by five governments who have built vast cities in order to house the overcrowded population. The ecological balance of the Earth has been devastated but there are a few who remain in the desert wastelands, known as The Gap.

Robert Foster, the main character is stolen from The Gap by security forces and taken to live in the corrupted cities. His homeland is ruined and his family murdered.

Confused as to the reasons for his relocation, Foster decides to investigate the corrupted governments behind the sprawling metropolis and soon finds himself caught up in a web of deceit and something much worse.

From what we have seen, Beneath a Steel Sky looks set to be one of the best games of '93 implementing the Virtual Theatre engine used to drive Lure of the Temptress. Let's just hope that the awkward user-interface has been improved since Lure.

Beneath a Steel Sky will be released under the Virgin label some time in November with a price tag yet to be set.



Right: Dave Gibbons, the Robert Redford of the cartoon world, spent a year designing graphics like this

Below Right: Interior scenes retain the same graphical quality as those outside

Lillehammer revisited

One million hotdogs will be sold, 344,000 loaves of bread munched through and over two million meals served to competitors. This is the 17th Winter Olympics, to be held in Lillehammer, Norway in January.

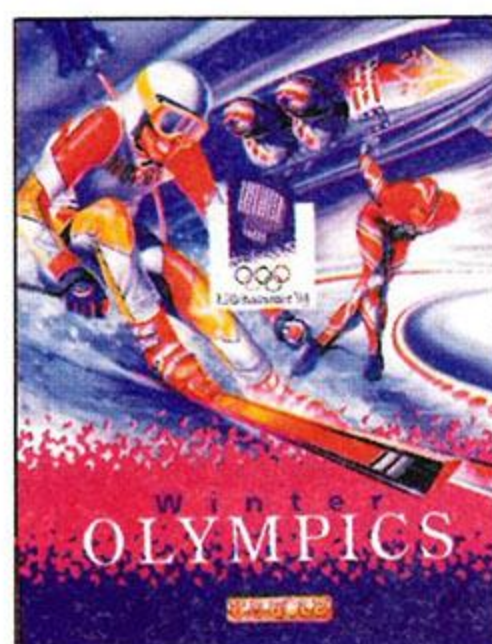
Not to miss a golden opportunity, especially after the success of the Barcelona '92 Summer Olympics which has exceeded £30 million worth of sales, US Gold have snapped up the only official computer, video and CD licence for the games to create a high quality sports simulation due for an early December launch.

Ten Olympic disciplines have been chosen for conversion into video format: downhill, ski-jump, bob-sleigh, short track speed skating and slalom, to name but five. Such a diverse selection will give to players, up to four at a time in fact, an equal balance of gameplay, variety and appeal.

To further compliment this package actual digitised images from Lillehammer itself have also been painstakingly reconstructed.

The look of the game closely mirrors that of the Olympic event and no more obvious is this than in the depiction of the digitised sprites themselves. One sportsman to lend his physical presence to the game is Wilf O'Reilly, world champion speedskater. Not only is he the only sportsperson to be featured in one way or another. In the CD-Rom version of the game, players will have access to a catalogue in which they can call up any Olympic event from 1924 upwards and watch film footage of the proceedings.

As Geoff Brown, chairman of US Gold says, 'Associating the US Gold brand with the Olympic movement instantly secures the tie in with quality, prestige and credibility.'



He's a journalist. He needs a scoop. And he's one very unusual character. This is Blount, the weakling turned hero of Goblins 3, successor to Goblins 2 and Goblins. Wonder what they'll call the fourth in the series then? Goblins?

Developed by Coktel Vision and due for an early November release, the game presents itself as another humourist adventure, loaded with tricky impasses and downright bizzariness.

Blount too, man of many traits, has the ability to transform himself from giant to werewolf, even to winged creature during the course of his progressively difficult daring-dos.



(top and bottom) Right: Initial sketches of the gaming arena

Right(centre): Blount the journalist begins his zany and humourist quest into a cartoony style world



TIME LINES

The PC Action guide to up and coming events in the video gaming world. Make a date:

PC events

- 3rd-5th November - Workgroup '93. Olympia, London. Tel: 0225 442244
- 11th-14th November - Future Entertainment Show. Olympia, London. Tel: 0225 442244
- 19th-21st November - Christmas International Computer Show. Wembley, London. Tel: 081 549 3444
- 24th-28th November - Supergames. Port de Versailles, Paris. Tel: 010 331 42 00 33 05
- 29th Nov-2nd December - VR User Show. London Novotel. Tel: 081 994 6477
- 2nd-5th December - Computer Shoppper Show. Olympia, London. Tel: 081 742 2828

PC charts

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Microsoft Flight Simulator V.5 | Microsoft £39.99 |
| 2. Privateer | Electronic Arts £49.99 |
| 3. Zool | Gremlin Graphics £34.99 |
| 4. X-Wing | US Gold £45.99 |
| 5. Links - Belfry | US Gold £22.99 |
| 6. Day of the Tentacle | US Gold £42.99 |
| 7. Railroad Deluxe | Microprose £39.99 |
| 8. Sensible Soccer 92/93 | Renegade/Mindscape £32.99 |
| 9. Links 386 Pro | US Gold £45.99 |
| 10. Syndicate | Electronic Arts £44.99 |

PC CD-ROM charts

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Day of the Tentacle | US Gold £45.99 |
| 2. The 7th Guest | Virgin £69.99 |
| 3. Dune | Virgin £49.99 |
| 4. King's Quest 5 | Sierra On-Line £49.99 |
| 5. Sherlock Holmes 3 | Mindscape £49.99 |
| 6. Chessmaster 3000 | Mindscape £44.99 |
| 7. Great Naval Battles | US Gold £44.99 |
| 8. Indiana Jones Fate of Atlantis | US Gold £45.99 |
| 9. Laura Bow | Sierra On-Line £44.99 |
| 10. Eric the Unready | Accolade £34.99 |

CD WORD

Right: The graphics will reflect the virtual reality scenes from the actual movie

Cutting the sods

As the staggering virtual reality effects of The Lawnmower Man, designed and produced by San Diego based Angel Studios, are being redefined for the forthcoming movie sequel, so too are the developers at Storm



embroiled in the multi-format video game counterpart. The CD ROM version is destined to be released in Jan/Feb next year in conjunction with Allied Vision's second attempt at stretching the boundaries of virtual experience even further. It will incorporate narrative features from both films as well as full colour visual footage.

The game attributes to you the role of Dr Angelo, pitting your cerebral prowess against Cyberjobe and his covey of cohorts.

Covering a wide assortment of game styles – in one section lateral thinking IQ tests will pull you up short, in others you may embark on fly through quick reflex scenarios – the game is expected to live up to the monicker of being a fully interactive motion video game.

Add to this ensemble a richly detailed 3D modelled VR world and, who knows, perhaps the finished result will produce a CD ROM game where imaginary is real. And where reality is beyond belief?



Above: High adrenalin flying sections take you through the skies

Right: Cyberjobe is transferred directly from the film and onto the computer screen

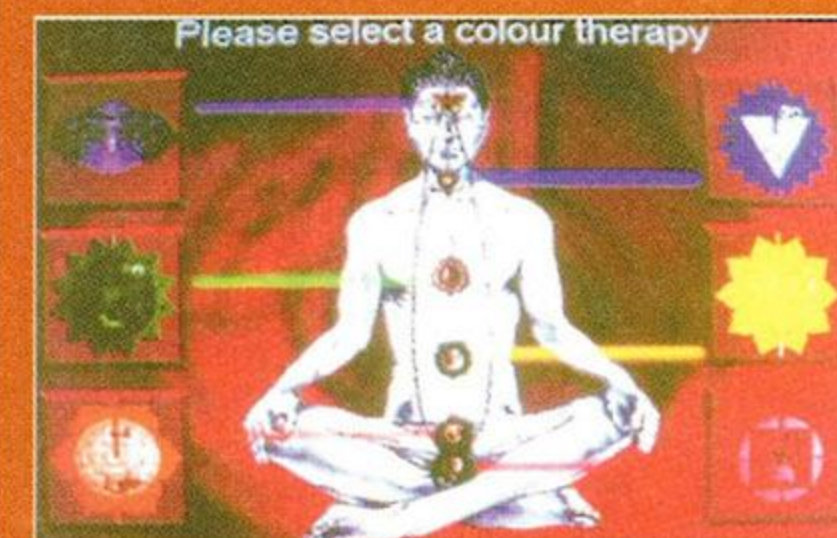


Love at first byte is soon to be a truly interactive experience as Viacom New Media, via Mindscape in the UK, prepare to uncloak Dracula Unleashed onto a blood thirsty CD ROM public. The game is faithfully based on the classic legend and will incorporate over 90 minutes of video. The players' task is to direct the drama itself and choose which pathways to take through a world shrouded in gothic mystery. Time is of the essence to save the lives of your nearest and dearest. The game, due for a November release is expected to retail at £49.99.

Love and PC man

Indigestion, Australian soap operas, car alarms, unable to get beyond second gear on the route to work... get the picture? It all spells stress. But soothe your crinkled brows and flush away the pills, for Digital Love really does luvve you.

Designed by multimedia pioneers Hex and distributed by Mindscape in the UK, the CD disk offers courses in yoga and breathing exercises which can be followed right in front of the screen. Digital Love will be available in November for £29.99.



Red Five, I'm going in

Rebel Assault takes full advantage of the CD platform while striving to maintain the spirit in which the Star Wars films were created.' This is Casey Donahue, assistant producer of the game speaking as he pre-empt's LucasArt's imminent Star Wars games success.

'We've taken footage and music directly from the movies but we feel that our games honour rather than copy the films. Rebel Assault will be one of the first games in the industry to take footage directly from video

and successfully wrap it in a three dimensional story driven interactive universe.'

Rebel Assault will be LucasArts' first CD ROM only game and it is now being developed simultaneously for the PC CD ROM, Sega CD and CD-I platforms.

The CD platform is being maximised to create a heart racing arcade action game to complement its floppy based sister X-Wing. Rendered 3D graphics and the implementation of 4 channel stereo, enabling sound FX, speech and sound to be played at the same time. This will add to the whole furore as players take control of X-Wing and A-Wing starfighters, a T16 Skyhopper and also ground-based snowspeeders in both manoeuvring and combat sequences.

The game has 15 different levels of play, each interspersed with cut cinematic scenes. Rocky planet surfaces, sleek ships and pock-marked asteroids set the scene for conflicts against Imperial Walkers, armoured transports and the like.

Only those with steady nerves and lightning fast reflexes will find a path from Tatooine and through to the Death Star while battling to retain hold of the Rebel bases.

Best described as a 3D arcade/action game as opposed to an out and out simulator, LucasArts are honing in on those players who prefer diving headlong into a game without necessarily taking time out to study all its aspects before it can be played fully.

Rebel Assault, distributed by US Gold in the UK, is set for a pre-Christmas release. Price yet to be confirmed.

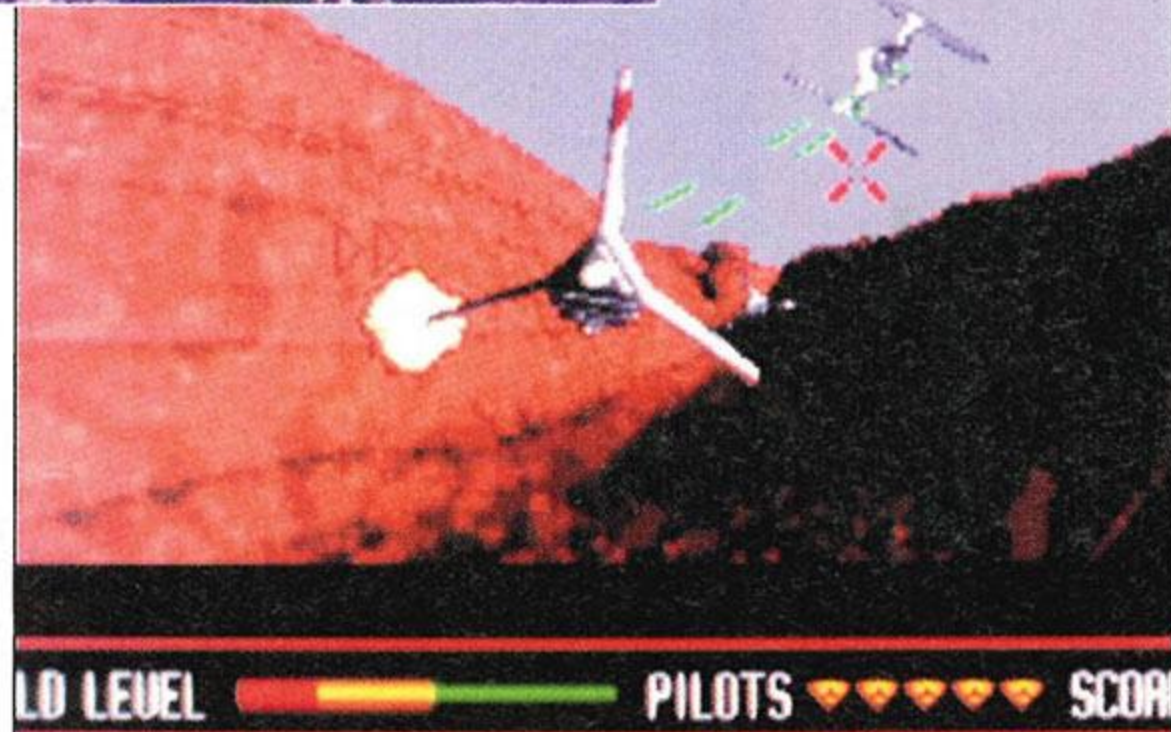


Above: Luke does battle against an arch enemy

Right: Take control of a Starfighter over the desert

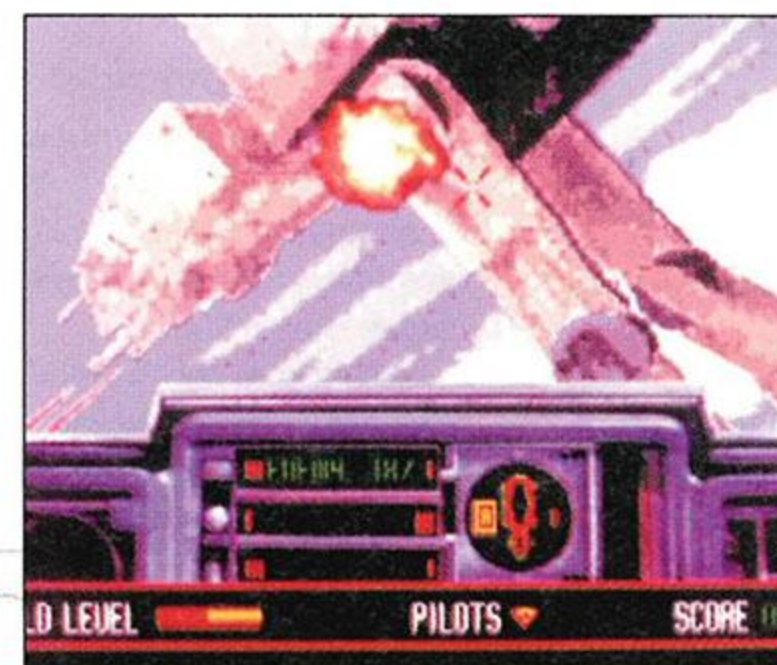
Below Right: Battle commences with the Dark Side of the Force

Far Right: Alter the pilot's view to get another angle on the action



'We're able to expand the Star Wars universe in ways that kindle the imaginations of people'

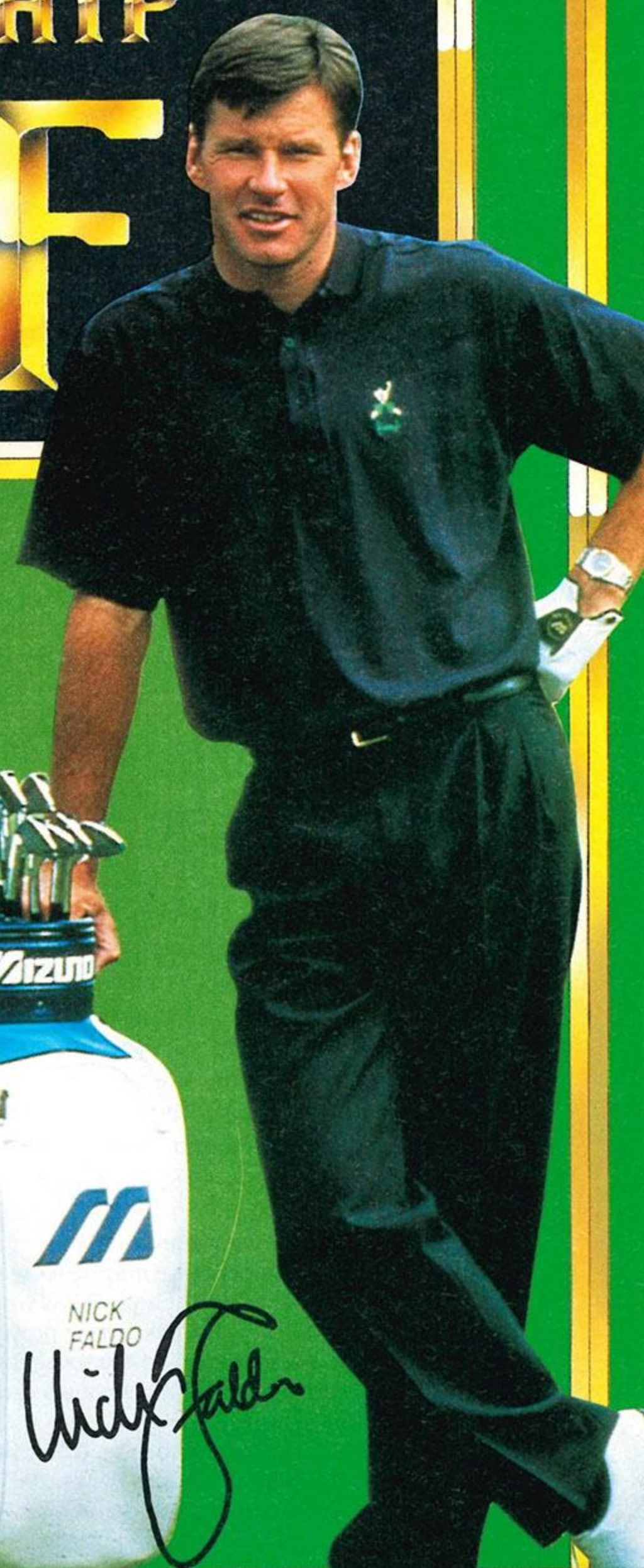
CASEY DONAHUE, ASSISTANT PRODUCER ON REBEL ASSAULT



NICK FALDOS

CHAMPIONSHIP

GOLF



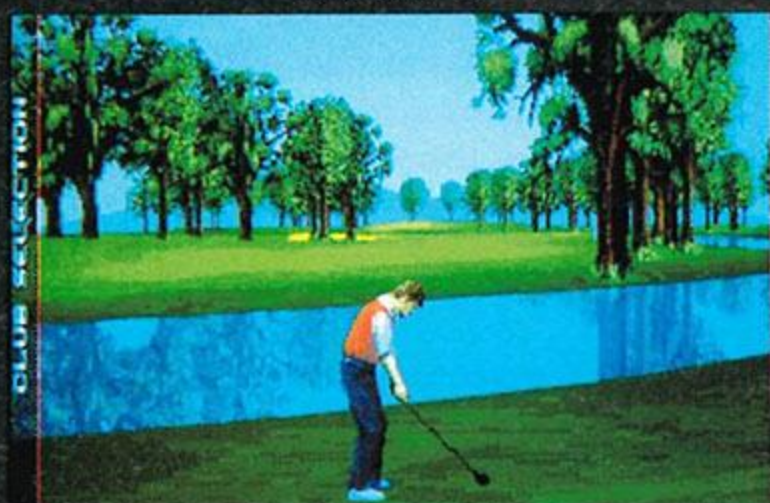
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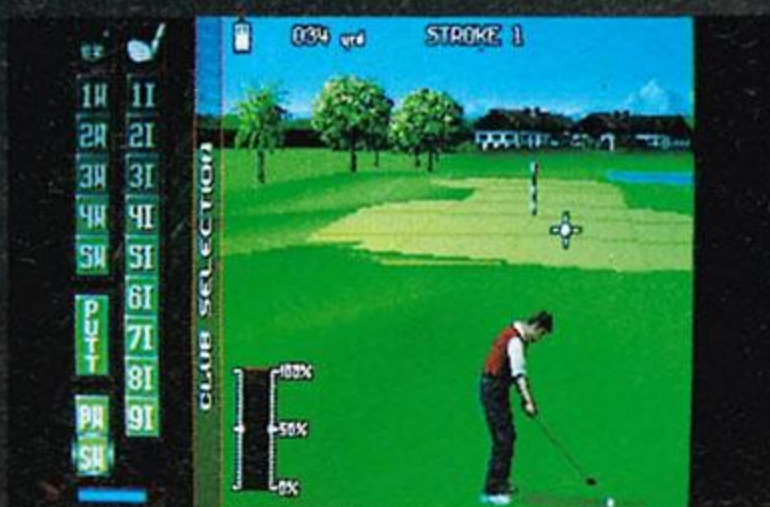
90%
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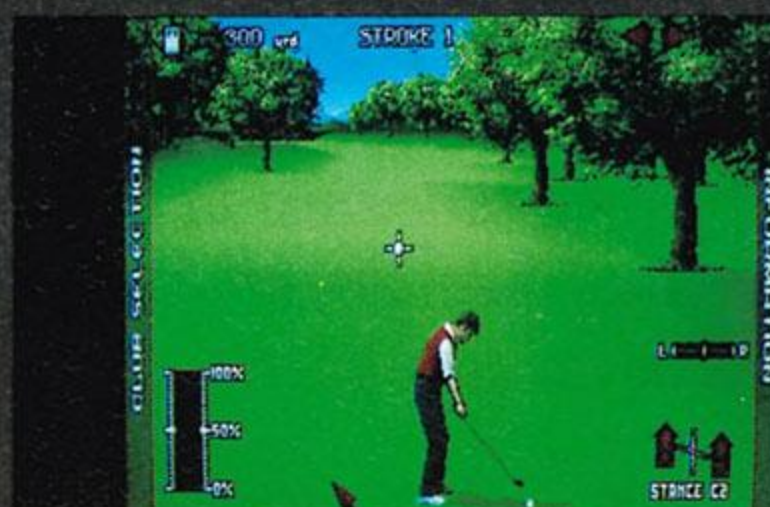


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Faldo in real life" – JOYSTICK

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WORLD INSIDE WORD

Elite is, arguably, the most influential game of all time. David Braben bids to rationalise five and a half years' production on its sequel – Frontier

Right: A variety of screenshots to ogle from Braben's long awaited sequel to Elite

The known is finite, the unknown infinite; intellectually we stand on an islet in the midst of an illimitable ocean of inexplicability. Our business in every generation is to reclaim a little more land.' T.H. Huxley, never one lost for words, provides a sentiment to which Elite designer David Braben aspires.

Not content to merely dip his toe in the cosmic ocean, Braben has manfully waded in up to his ankles, dedicating a decade-long career to what the cynical may describe as an unhealthy indulgence in space stuff.

From his trim residence on the river Cam, the unassuming, mild-mannered Braben has hit on a concept that is both inventive, marketable, experimental and lucrative. In the early eighties he began to toy with shapes and polygons on his BBC computer. At that time the game industry, very much in its infancy, had stretched little further than Space Invaders and Break Out.

A space opera of the complexity of 2001 AD in three-dimensions seemed unlikely and certainly not bankable. But Braben was the first to explore this possibility and, driven by his enthusiasm for the Cosmos and its relativity to physics and mathematics, the seed for Elite was sewn.

To understand Elite's appeal and subsequent popularity one must first look at the ethos of the game. The ruse is really quite irresistible to a generation that sees all concepts of space as being feasible, yet teasingly out of reach.

The time-guzzling nature of space exploration means that we may never see it. There is an alternative though. This is where Elite is seen to come into its own. It provides the vehicle, the concept and the suspense-of-belief to accelerate time and imbue a certain kind of immortality.

Frontier, the sequel to Elite, offers similar statistics and aspirations to the original kernel. What has engrossed Braben for more than five years is not immediately apparent on paper but dig deeper and you discover a sequel more far-reaching than



ever before. Most certainly, the author's interest in astronomy has driven him to lavish the game with extreme detail. It boasts of more than a hundred star systems and includes all the planets and moons of our own

system. From this Braben has made the startling discovery that another planet about the size of Jupiter in our immediate locale would drastically imbalance the system.

The success of Elite, the original game, has afforded Braben the time and luxury to work on this new program. Frontier features a stunning matrix of systems, each of which can be magnified. Here, as if by a 'rule of thumb' measurement, the temperature of each system is calculated. This temperature is then used to determine the atmosphere and, in turn, decides whether it is inhabitable.

It is quite plain Braben has been careful not to break the Elite mould with Frontier which most certainly carries over the feel and aura of Elite, kicking off with a front-end introductory movie which shouts with some decibels 'I am state-of-the-art and I mean business!' The stunning intro sequence with a gloss musical carriage lulls the player into the Frontier foyer where the program suddenly says, 'It is here that the bullshit stops!'

In the sequel, you, the player, must choose to pursue many varied vocations. Some are dangerous, others illegal, a few more mundane but potentially as adventure-filled. How the player

'I suppose my interest in astronomy and, to some, unhealthy indulgence in space stuff, has driven me to lavish the game with extreme detail'

DAVID BRABEN



adapts and reacts to the role is what matters. As a simple courier, the player can be offered a consignment via bulletin board communication. One can tell if it will be dangerous or illegal through conversation, and also by the amount of money on offer.

At this stage the player can decide what risks to take. The occasion may arise when a fugitive will offer a king's ransom to get away from a star system. The implications are certainly great. If discovered he could be arrested, extradited and unable to trade.

The other side of the coin is the more sinister, raw, hard underbelly of life. As either assassin, trader or smuggler the rewards are massive and the penalties terrible. As assassin, the player comes into communication with political oppositions or business rivals that target an individual. The player must track down the target, identify and eliminate him, and enter hyperspace pronto. Equally as risky is the role of smuggler, dealing in commodities that certain outlawed planets might require.

As trader the player pursues the time honoured Elite method of money making. Here trading is generally legit unless the reward is too great to turn down.

The prodigal trader must maintain amicability everywhere to ensure safe passage and priority landing. It is important to learn the commodity markets for a sure fire way of progressing financially; although the opportunity to flout the law certainly adds spice to life.

During production Braben will have seen many advances in the state of the games market but he denies feeling pressurised to step up the emphasis on graphics. Five and a half years have been dedicated to creating the cosmos on a home computer.

Thanks to his unmatched endurance and conviction, a colossus of a game is ready to surface. Perhaps this will be the last one-man project to come good.

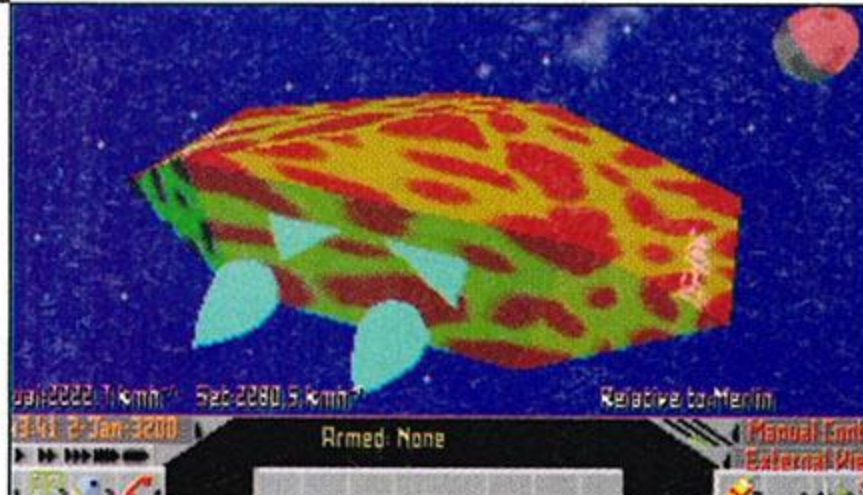
Jason Spiller

21st

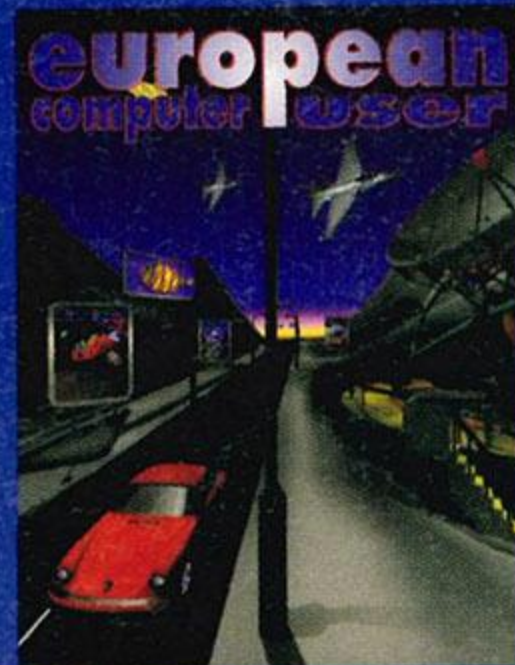


Right: Travel around the cosmos and learn to trade with ease

Far Right: David Braben relaxing by the river Cam near where he lives



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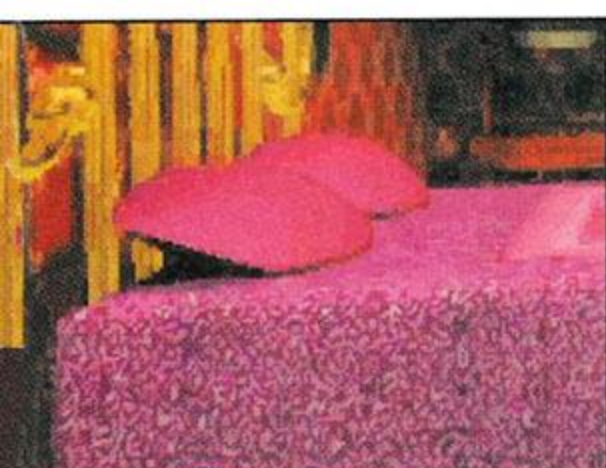
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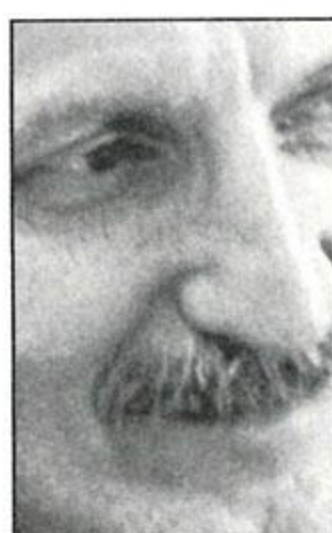


revolution

Can the floppy disk meet the challenge of new technological advancements? Or will the upstart compact disk sweep the board?



back in the dance halls of the 1940s steel strung guitars just couldn't compete with the accumulative loudness of the crowd, trumpets and drums. It needed a man like Les Paul to recognise the fact that amplification was needed to get things back on an equal footing.

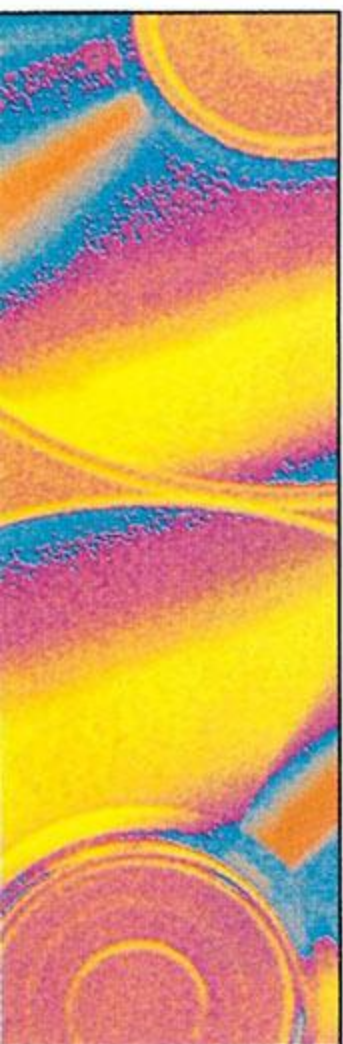


He filled a guitar with solid wood and built an electronic pick-up to go under the strings. The age of the electronic guitar was thus born. Within a year everyone had jumped on the bandwagon and this new electronic age became readily accepted as the norm.

Using this example as a loose analogy, the encroachment of a real CD-Rom user base is unveiling the same phenomenon. Games are requiring more and more hard disk space.

Syndicate for example, takes 590K base memory and four meg additional RAM to run properly. Likewise, Strike Commander requires 602 base RAM plus four meg extra RAM to use the program. Just as relevant is the fact that developers are growing ever more daring in their gaming visions and the excessive amount of detail they want to include, and players' expectations are continually rising.

Amplification is needed, both in terms of strength and expansion. A CD will hold up to 600Mb of data as opposed to the weedy 1.44Mb of a floppy disk. As a generic form it is therefore inevitable that it will overtake a disk based industry that's hampered with piracy and faulty disks. But when? And do bigger games and greater detail really go hand in glove with better entertainment?



CD-ROM revolution

Developing games for CD demands a particular kind of computing skill, both conceptual and technical. The technology behind Full Motion Video, digitised speech and a greater degree of interactivity are now being disseminated and made accessible to a broad spectrum of people. The learning curve is on the rise.

Publishers are now all PC led, following the trend of an ever increasing installed base. The best games on the market are, noticeably, all exclusively PC. Take the award winning Alone in the

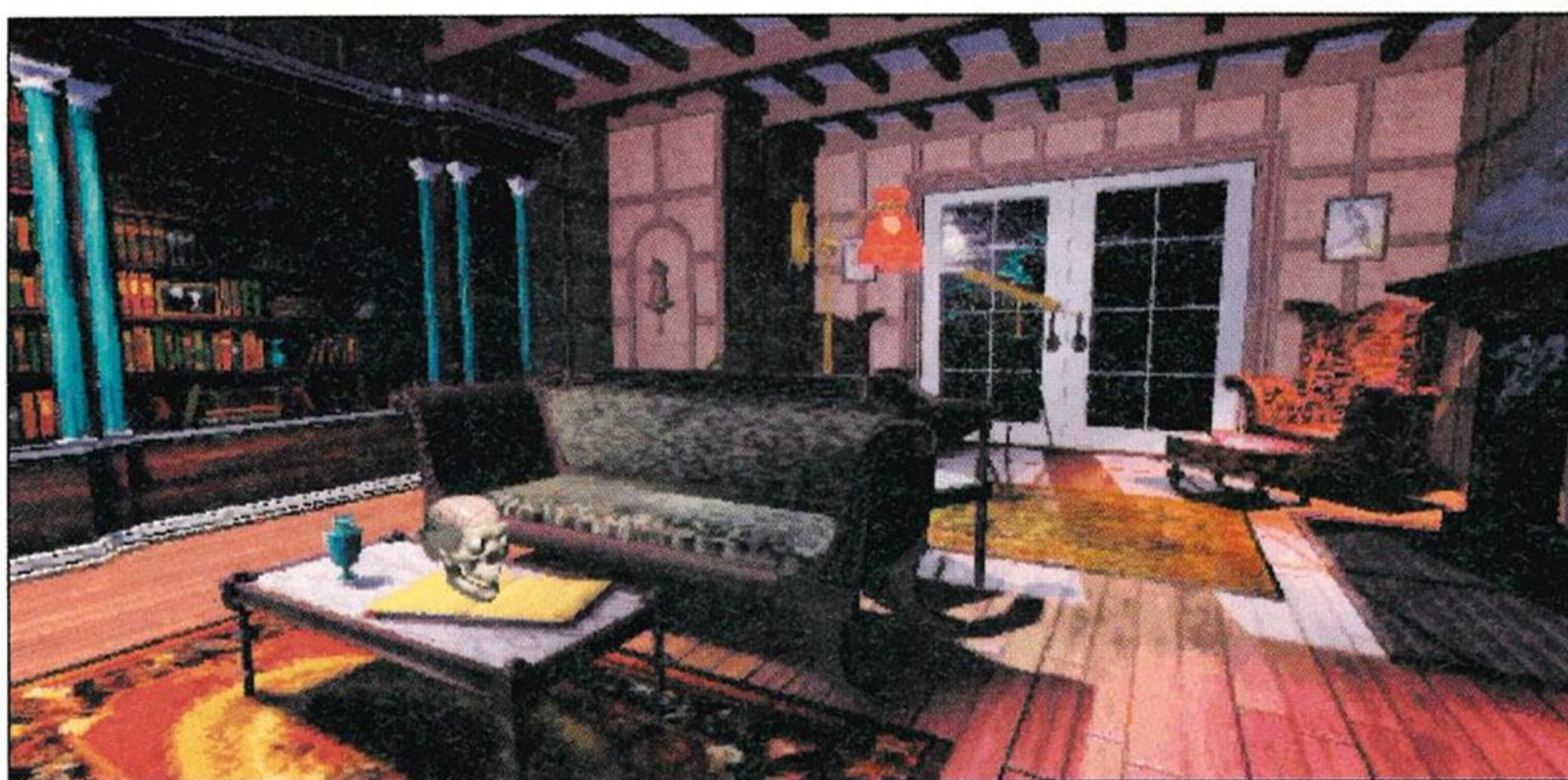
Dark with its wholly new camera techniques and atmospheric vibes and also X-Wing, available only on the PC. Put Ultima Underworld by its side and you have yet another winner.

There will be over 100 PC games launched in the run up to the Christmas bonanza. Interestingly, fewer products will be appearing first and foremost on floppy disk. Publishers are starting to move away from shovelling existing games onto CD, and products are being launched simultaneously on floppy and CD. Publishers are also the first to admit that 18 months down the line they will be producing exclusively on CD.

Music CDs first appeared in the early '80s but something huge, something that would sell the new platform to the public was needed. This came in the form of Dire Strait's Brothers in Arms album in 1985.

Suddenly the CD and its enhanced capabilities were THE thing to have and the market has seen phenomenal growth since. The gaming world has needed a forerunner to mirror this. Maybe Virgin's The 7th Guest could be another Brothers in Arms, the game that's taken the plunge. Already sales figures for the game have been exceptional, exceeded 50,000 in unit sales across Europe.

Over two years in the making, The 7th Guest is the CD-Rom game that has come the closest yet to exploiting the CD medium. It incorporates 36 minutes of full motion video



Above: The 7th Guest, Virgin's revolutionary game that fully uses the potential of the CD-Rom platform. Here we enter the library to get some clues from the book on the table regarding the puzzles to be solved **Right:** Wander about the bedrooms in the mansion, only to be stopped by brain deadening conundrums **Below:** Innovative camera angles play an important part in adding to the eery atmosphere integral to the game. Here we zoom in on a potential teaser to test the grey matter

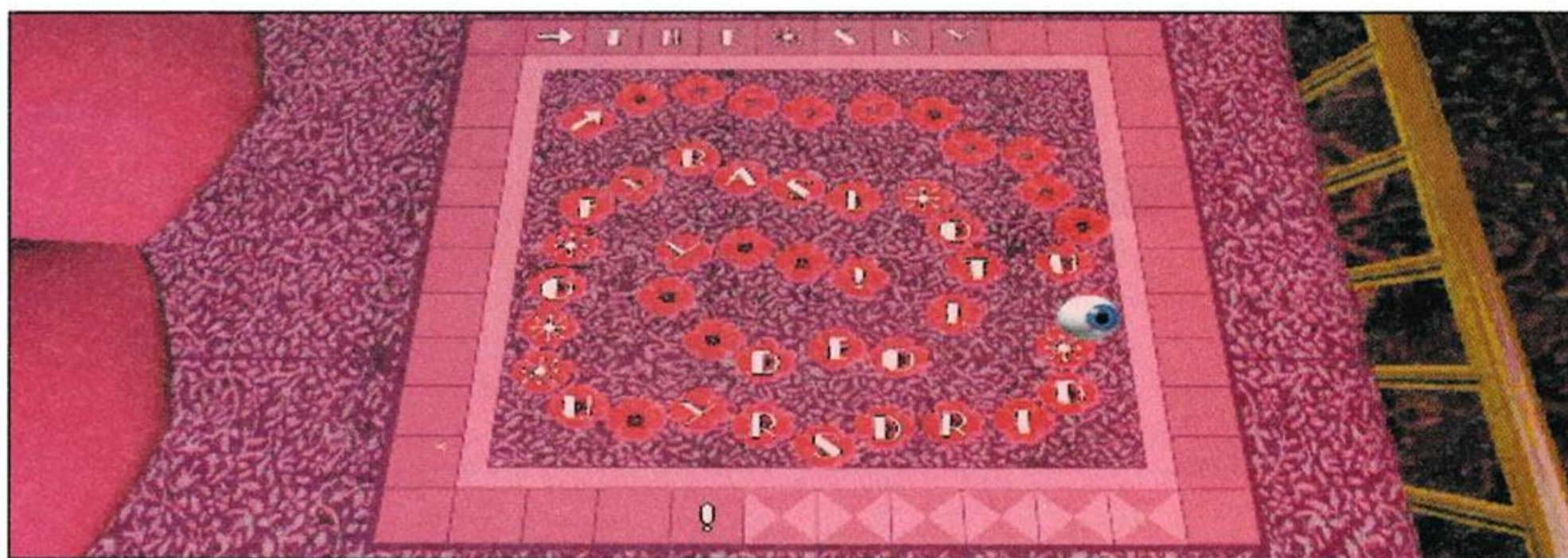


and dialogue recorded by live artists. Its 3D layouts within a 22 room mansion will maybe become the blueprint for the future, whirling interactive entertainment off into a whole new dimension.

High resolution graphic backgrounds scroll and rotate around the characters in this combination of David Lynch style directing and mystery solving, that follows a similar pattern to the mental conundrums facing contestants in Channel 4's Crystal Maze. Puzzle orientated

and dressed with gothic horror petticoats, this game marks the launch site for hyper growth in interactive drama and front end theatricality on the computer game screen.

It's horribly expensive, the puzzles aren't terribly taxing and the stringent hardware requirements mean you need to have the very best machine to enable the game to work painlessly. But despite these grievances, Trilobyte deserve top marks for dipping the first of many paddles into uncharted waters.



Shovelware is the term, used rather disparagingly, for the conversion, or 'shovelling', of floppy based games on to a CD and then released as, essentially, a new game. In the majority of cases there are the addition of digitised speech, aesthetic improvements and minor enhancements, but whether this really warrants the price hike

remains questionable. Some of the shovelware products already on the market are:

DAY OF THE TENTACLE

LucasArt's Day of the Tentacle has been released on disk and CD-Rom concurrently and boasts the acclaim of being the first full

talkie game. It offers spoken parts (over 4,000 lines of branching dialogue) for almost every response and action.

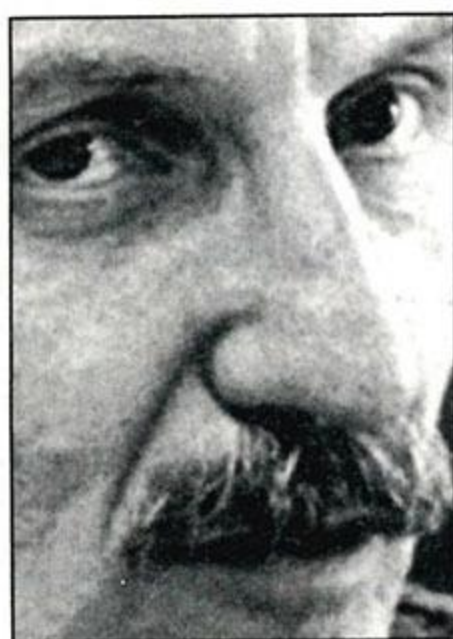
After being spoilt by this and being really drawn into the whole cartoony feel of such a quirky adventure, maybe you'll never want to return to the, by then, tedious task of reading four lines of dialogue on screen.

LucasArts/US Gold

INDIANA JONES AND THE FATE OF ATLANTIS

The epitome of what every graphic adventure should be like. With an ever ranging variety of locations and multi layered puzzles to tease furrows onto the foreheads of even the most logical thinkers.

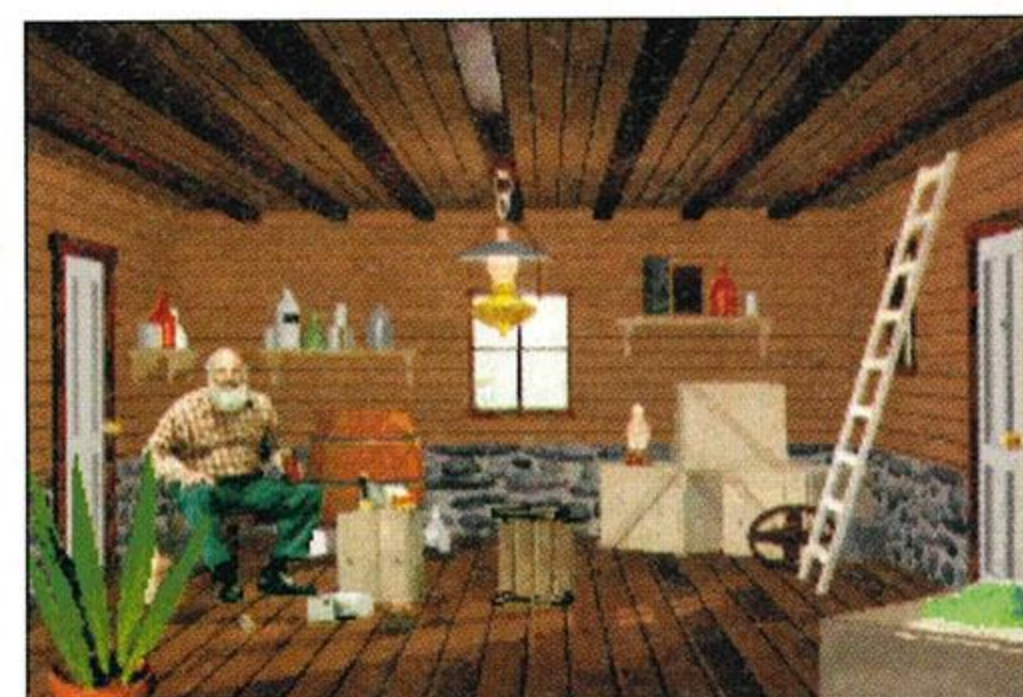
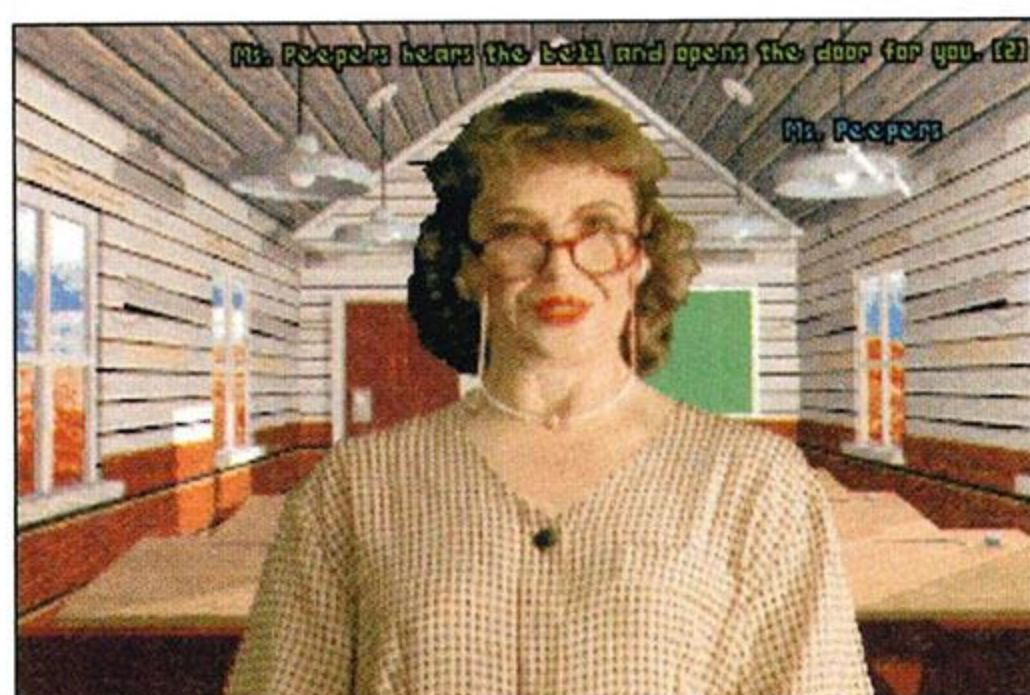




AS A GENERIC FORMAT IT IS INEVITABLE THAT CD WILL SUCCEED. OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS IT WILL TAKE OVER THE FLOPPY DISK BASED INDUSTRY AND WILL ALSO SUPPLANT CARTRIDGES DUE TO ITS COST EFFECTIVENESS, ALTHOUGH TECHNOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENTS WILL STILL KEEP THE PRICES HIGH

JERRY WOLLESENKO, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER FOR PSYGNOSIS IN NORTH AMERICA

Below: Return to Zork, Activision's interactive video game drama holds many surprises and invites a great deal of exploration **Bottom Right:** How do you handle a drunk? Well, you ply him with even more booze until he falls off his chair to reveal a trap door beneath **Bottom Centre:** You come across a waif huddled under a bridge. Talk to him and maybe words of kindness will reap something in return **Bottom Left:** In the schoolroom prepare for a pop quiz with a difference



Activision's forthcoming Return to Zork also maximises the CD-Rom platform's speed and storage space to produce a theatrical experience. It's the first game to use motion picture quality production techniques, with Full Motion Video of famous American actors set against computer generated backgrounds.

The result is a truly interactive drama that provides all the puzzles and dilemmas associated with the very best of graphic adventures, as well as a wealth of visual material in true Hollywood style.

The CD-Rom can't fail to attract attention. Jerry Wollesenko, CEO for Psygnosis in North America firmly believes in the new platform as

moulding the shape of entertainment to come. As he says, 'The most viable of platforms right now is the Sega CD but the PC CD format and the Macintosh CD are also big platforms in the States, with the PC CD being the next most prolific user base.'

'The 7th Guest is one of the most powerful CD-Rom games at the moment but in the next six months more and more products, excluding shovelware, will begin to seep through.'

'The 386SX is the minimum machine that people are buying right now. From a conceptual point of view games are including more and more complex images and becoming increasingly faster. Traditional musicians didn't

know how to handle, say, synthesizers when they first appeared, but they've come a long way since then. With better tools to work with in the video game business the same sort of things are going to happen.'

'Simply porting arcade orientated games onto CD won't work particularly well because of the intense penetration of console games. When it comes to PC games playing, people prefer adventures and gaming experiences bordering on interactive fiction. CD is the right platform and has the storage space to deliver the goods.'

Games aside, Edutainment is probably the most rapidly expanding area when it

And now it has over 8,000 lines of spoken dialogue and additional digitised sound effects to boost the CD-Rom reincarnation.

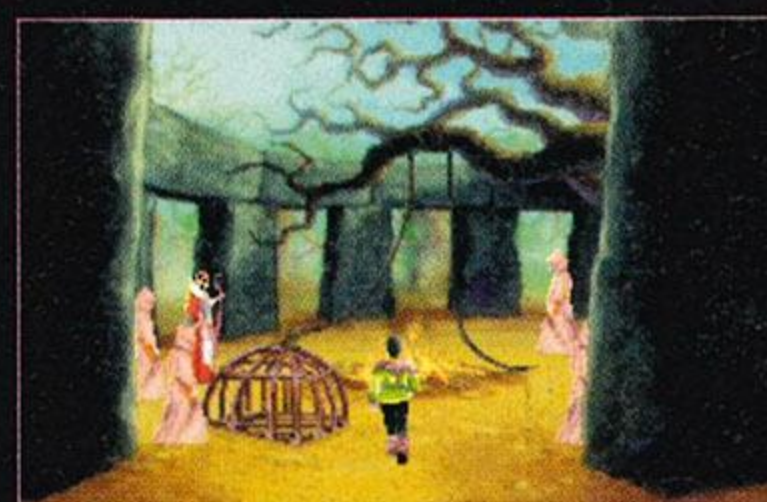
The game plays entirely from the CD drive (preferably a fast one so as to avoid splutters in mid sentence) and although hearing the spoken word is far superior to reading lines of text, the main bone of contention is that Harrison Ford's voice just can't be mimicked to the extent of sounding like the main man himself.

Marcus Brody sounds on a par with his film counterpart but old Indy is just not gruff enough nor rough enough to encourage you to become totally involved in the action. With expectations so high, the whole Indy feel of the 1930s fails to be recaptured.

LucasArts/US Gold

KING'S QUEST VI

Determined not to stray from familiar ground, this is the latest in Roberta Williams's epic line of adventurous tales set in exotic lands at the borders of

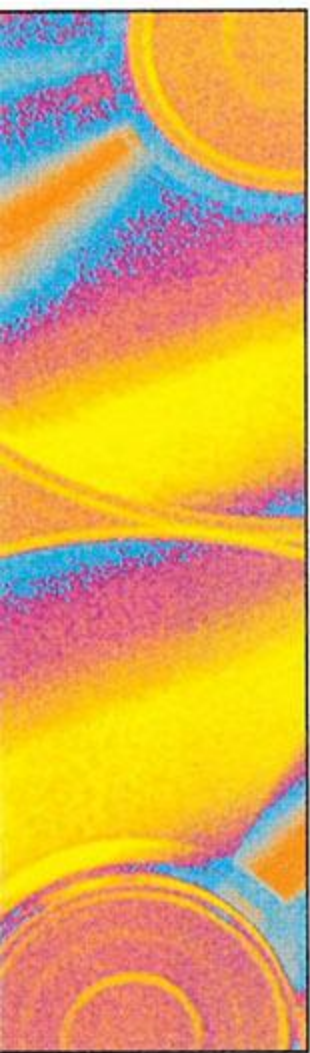


the imagination. Graphics are beautifully drawn and gameplay flows seamlessly from one gauntlet of puzzles to the next in a fairly non linear and highly absorbing adventure.

Again, this is a full talkie. Once you've become acquainted with the corny American accents and learnt to stomach the, at

times, lengthy dialogue interspersions, the ongoing plot should hold you for hours. The only fault lies in the fact that often you have to do things in a very roundabout way. Fail to pick up on something early on in the game and a whack of backtracking and tediously redoing certain sections may be the only answer before further progress can be made.

Sierra On-Line



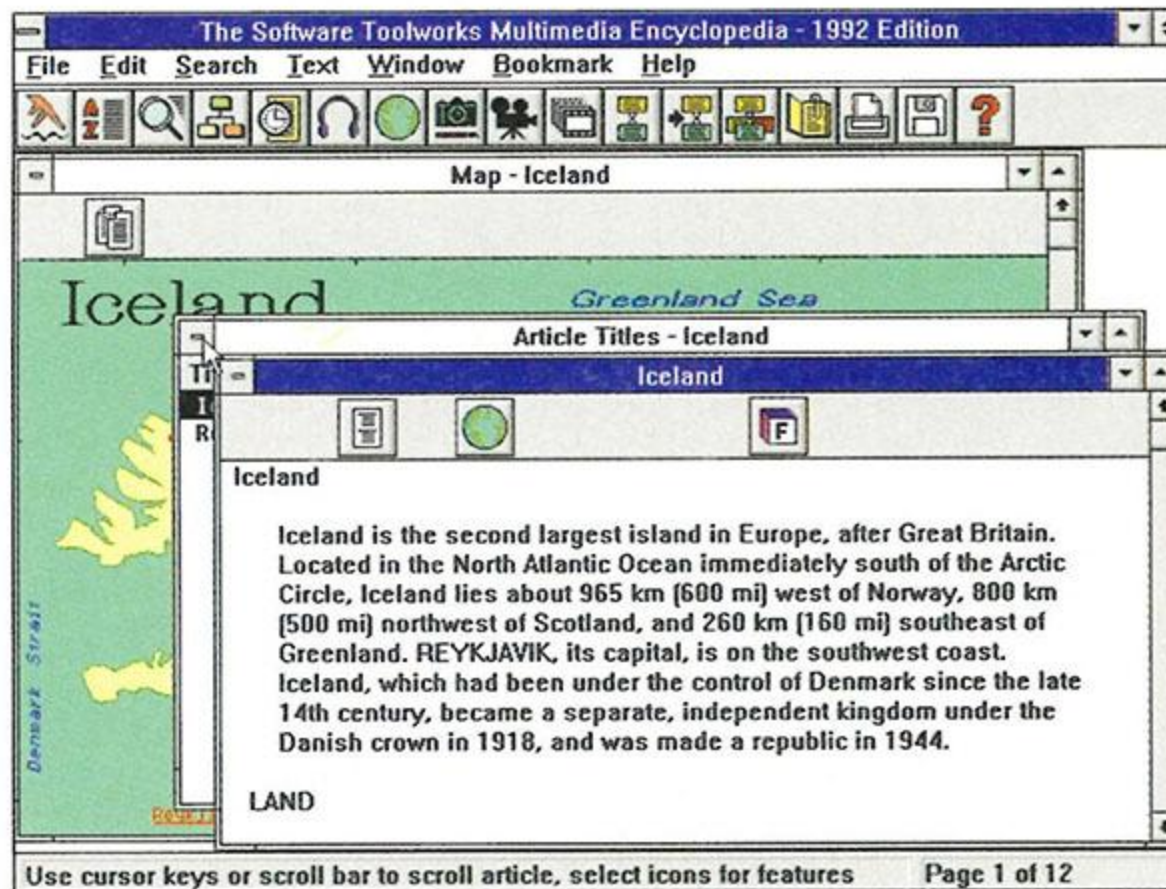
CD-ROM revolution

expansion into the consumer market. Nowhere else can you reproduce the experience of a CD encyclopaedia. You may be able to cross reference a topic in a book, watch pictures on the television screen and listen to news broadcasts on the radio, but all these separate sources of information can't be amassed in one combined sitting.

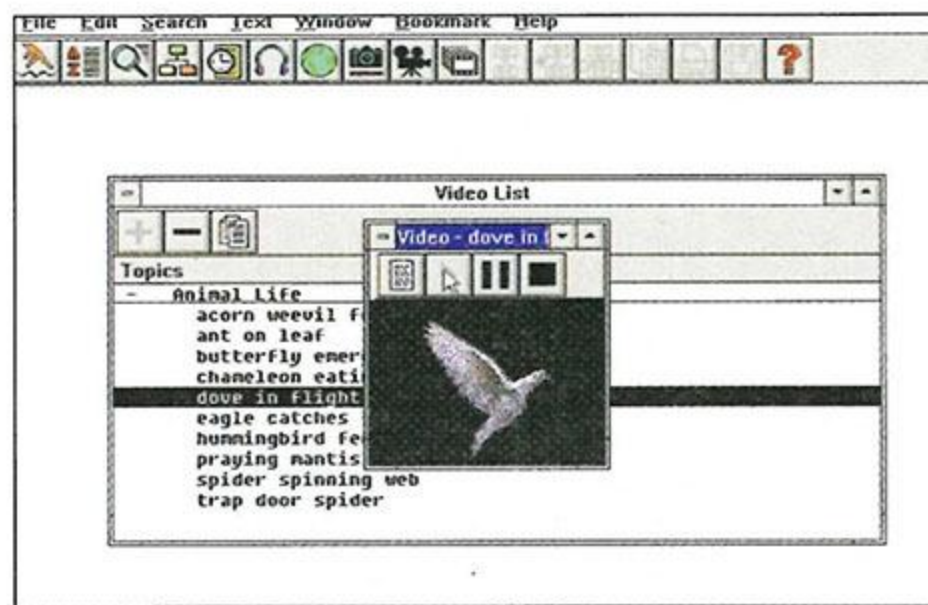
That is unless you happen to have access to a CD Rom drive. With the Multimedia Encyclopaedia you can listen to, watch and read archive clips all at the same time and also cross reference and source new data at the roll of a cursor and the flick of a mouse button. In no other way can a product offer a non linear

comes to maximising the CD platform and reaching that elusive concept known as Multimedia – the blending of data culled from a number of different sources such as text, graphics and sound FX.

Software Toolworks, marketed by Mindscape in Europe, specialise in adult Edutainment, Interactive Information and Multimedia reference markets. They aim to direct products towards informative family use and are now putting all their energy behind an aggressive CD Rom



Left: Explore the world by taking yourself to any destination with Grolier's Multimedia Encyclopedia **Above:** Learn all about the countries you'd love to visit by studying maps and place names **Below Left:** Access the video list to witness demonstrative moving images of the workings of animal life among others. Here we see a dove in flight



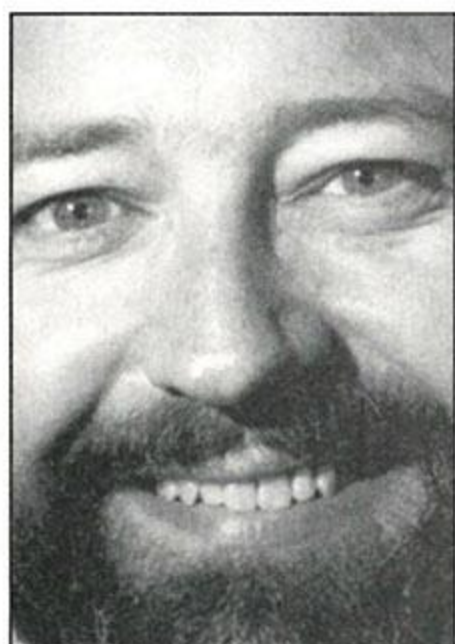
way of navigating through knowledge. A CD base has so much potential in defining future software. Full motion digital video is the fast emerging phenomenon in the world of high resolution graphics games. CD-Rom has the mass storage and speed to provide interactive

video sequences and store vast amounts of detail to make a game a melting pot of aural and visual delights.

Using the technology of today, the deliverance of absorbing and fulfilling gaming experiences which, to a certain extent, have eluded the industry of late, is fast becoming more than just wishful thinking.

At the end of the day though, the success of a game is not dictated by its graphics and sophistication. The bottom line demands that its core has to be good. Take Tetris on the Game Boy for example. How simple and addictive can you get. The trappings of 3D and fancy technological tricks may attract attention, but they won't necessarily make something successful.

Ultimately, the main advantage of the



THERE REALLY IS NO FUTURE FOR FLOPPY BASED PRODUCTS. ONCE PLAYERS HAVE EXPERIENCED CD-ROM THEY'LL NEVER GO BACK TO MESSING AROUND WITH TROUBLESOME DISKS. I FORESEE A TIME WHERE CD-ROM CAROUSELS WILL ALLOW A NUMBER OF DISCS TO BE SWAPPED AROUND

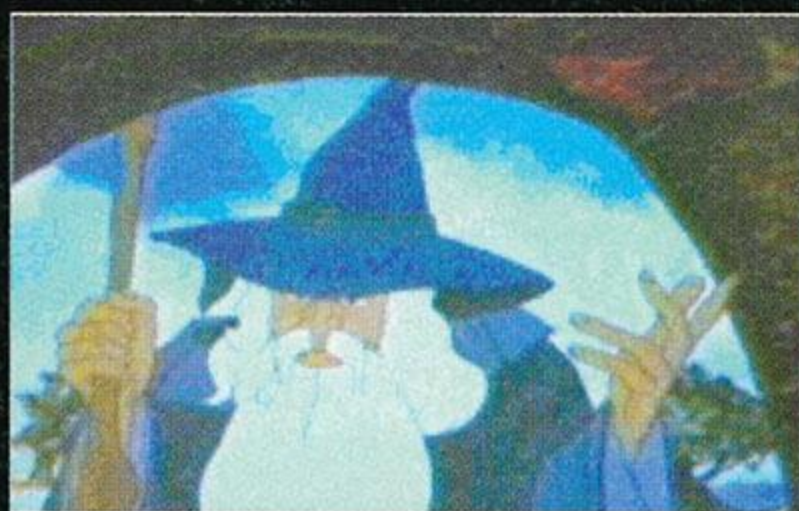
AL LOWE GAME DESIGNER FOR SERRA ON LINE

LORD OF THE RINGS

The floppy based Lord of the Rings game first appeared in 1990. Although the user interface has now been polished up and Interplay insist that the in-game graphics have been improved considerably, they do, nevertheless, look almost identical to the original.

Before the actual role-playing environment begins you are treated to approx 10 minutes of storyline taken straight from the animated movie. The quality has suffered somewhat in conversion but for die-hard JRR Tolkien lovers it does pep up the overall atmosphere that's severely lacking in gameplay itself.

Interplay



BATTLE CHESS

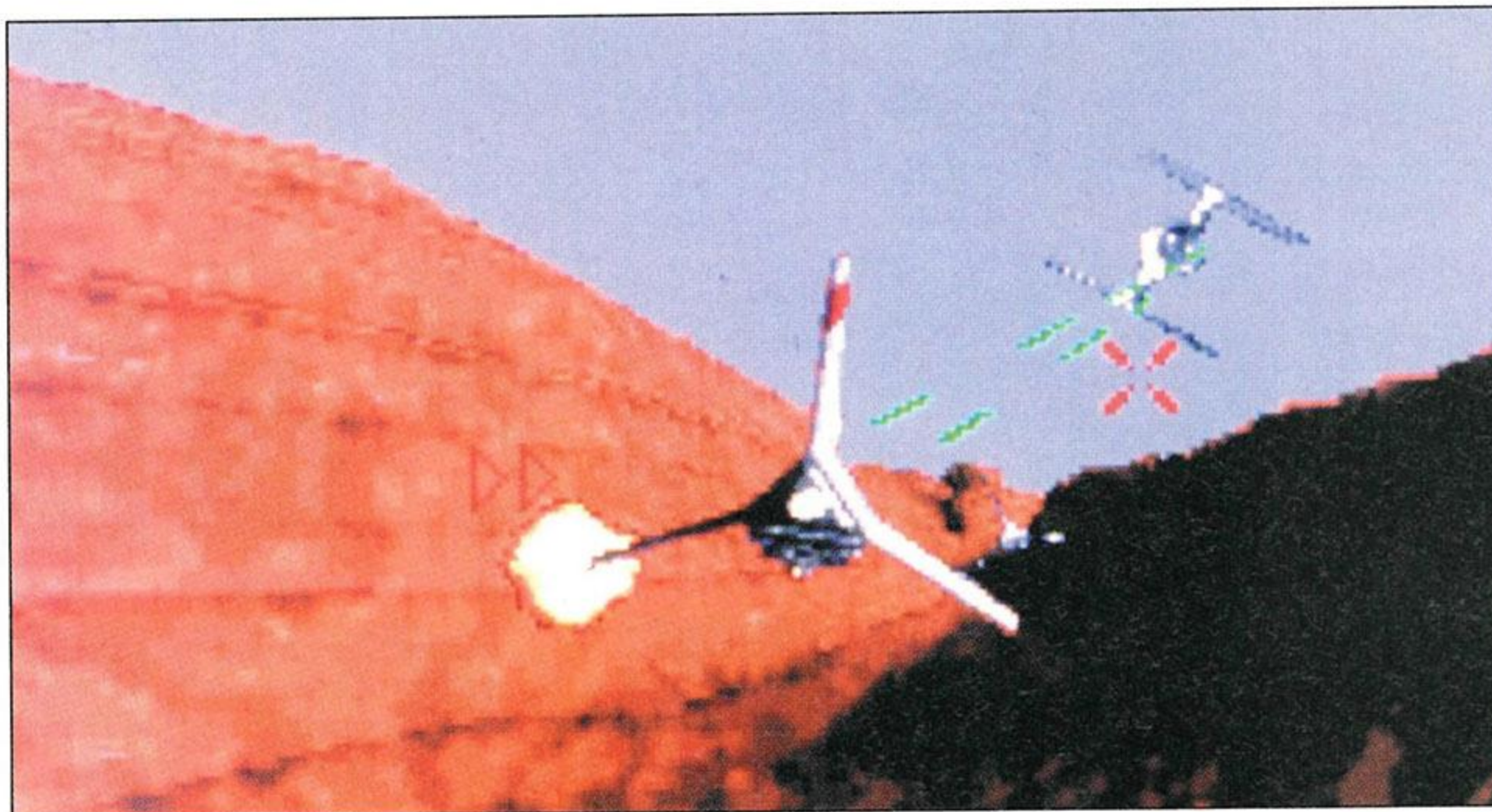
If one had to name a chess simulator that combined a ruthless yet intelligent computer opponent with atmospheric graphics, it would have to be Battle Chess.

It is the sound effects which have benefited most from the conversion to CD-Rom, indicated by the terrific bone-crunching battle sound effects as



each chess piece fights for supremacy of the board. The superb and extremely helpful tutorial features each chess piece which animates onto the board and addresses you in a wonderful stereo voice.

The speed of gameplay, by comparison, has suffered whereas graphics and gameplay have



Above: Rebel Assault, on CD-Rom only, takes LucasArts to a new dimension in games design. An imperial battle against the dark side of the Force gets under way with a vengeance **Left:** In your X-Wing view the destruction you're causing from the cockpit **Below:** The icy landscape of Hoth holds forbidding terrors. May the Force be with you to steer a safe passageway through



CD-Rom platform is that it allows extra features to be implemented in games. As Casey Donahue, assistant producer on LucasArts forthcoming Rebel Assault CD only game says, 'We've taken full advantage of the CD platform. The game is rendered entirely using 3D graphics and features digitized video from the original Star Wars movies.

'There will also be John Williams' original Star Wars score, professional actors' speech and sound effects from Skywalker Sound. All these feature would be impossible were it not for the extra storage space.' Put the game on floppy and you would need 300Mb of free hard disk space and over 200 high density floppy disks.

Developing costs – more than £250,000 per game, requiring a minimum 5,500 sales copies to make a profit – may still impede a full attack on the CD-Rom market. Standards too are yet to settle, but prices are falling and it looks likely that by this time next year CD will

be a major component in the game field.

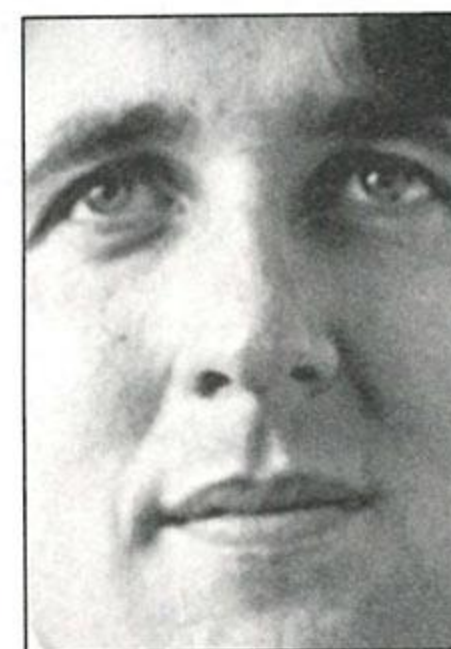
Penetration of PC hardware in the UK now stands at 7 per cent, the highest in Europe. That means there are an average of 1.54 million machines already in homes. On unit sales PC games have reached an all time high with 7.4 per cent of the market. This represents an increase of 370 per cent since 1991.

The USA installed base of CD-Rom drives is 600,000 and already that figure is estimated to grow to 15 million units within three years.

Up to 15 per cent of PCs in Europe have CD drives. Two years hence this is looking to be more like 50 per cent. Maybe the tide will turn even sooner than that.

SHARON GREAVES

PCMA



THE
FUTURE
OF GAMES
LIES IN 3D
WITH

STEREO SURROUND
SOUND, BETTER
AUDIOS AND A
HEIGHTENED
IMMERSION INTO
THE GAME. IT'LL BE
VIRTUAL REALITY
ON THE SCREEN
WITH YOU REALLY
PARTICIPATING IN
THE ACTION AS
THOUGH SMACK
BANG IN THE
MIDDLE OF A MOVIE
SEQUENCE

MARTIN KENWRIGHT, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF
DIGITAL IMAGE DESIGN

changed little. To be fair though, there's little that could be done to improve these departments.

Interplay

TORNADO

Both the RAF and British Aerospace had design input in Tornado to give to it a real feel of authenticity and now, due to its success on floppy, the game has been repackaged to cater for the CD ROM user base. Boasting the



claim of being the first authentic flight sim on this format, a target rich environment compounded with a plethora of multi-mission campaigns is the order of the day.

The package itself includes 10 tracks from the acclaimed Tornado soundtrack CD album and also the Merlin Helicopter flight simulation, specifically designed for the Royal Navy and previously unavailable for general purchase.

Digital Integration

FORTHCOMING TITLES TO LOOK FORWARD TO IN THE NEXT TWO MONTHS:

Winter Olympics - US Gold

Sam and Max - LucasArts

Star Trek 25th Anniversary - Interplay

Microcosm - Psygnosis

Conspiracy - Virgin



IMPORTANT - PLEASE NOTE
C = CGA (Colour Graphics Adaptor)
E = EGA (Enhanced Graphics Adaptor)
V = VGA (Video Graphics Array)
SV = Super VGA
256C = 256 colour
286/386 = Minimum machine requirement
MB = Minimum requirement of RAM
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DUAL = Both 3.5" and 5.25" disks included
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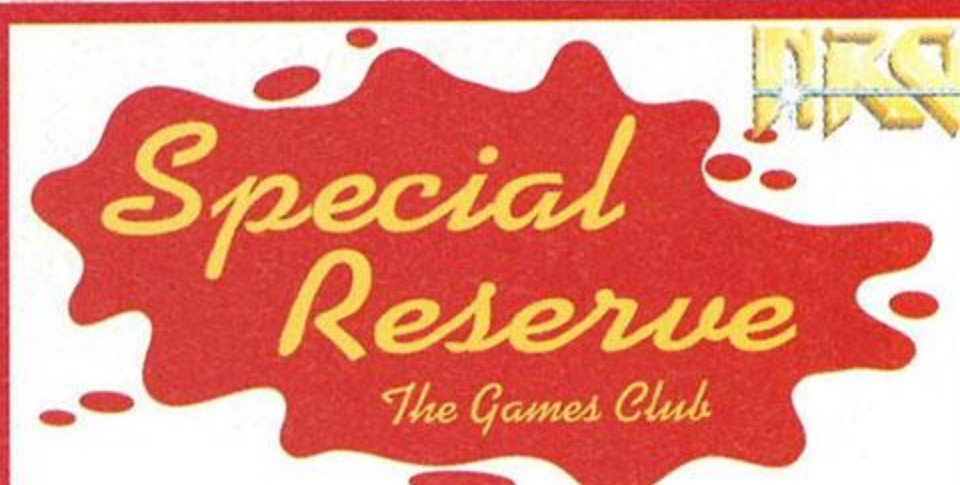
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BENCHTEST

Overladen to toppling point with games, this is the section of PC Action that draws you into an in-depth analysis of all the latest software releases. All genres are covered and all kinds of opinions dragged to the surface to give you the most comprehensive buying guide to PC games.

Top drawer graphics and digitized samples may push a game to a higher echelon but, at the end of the day, it's gameplay that really counts. We therefore give an overall score for the games in question, taking into account the feel of them when all the factors have been considered and welded together.

With over 100 products coming onto the market in the lead up to the Christmas period, it would be impossible to give each and every game offering the full review treatment. The games we feel are worthy of merit are therefore submitted to an indepth review. Others will get the mini review treatment.

STARLORD

PUBLISHER	Microprose
CONTACT	0454 326532
TEAM	Mike Singleton
PRICE	£44.99
RELEASE DATE	Nov

'Nothing troubles me more than time and space; and yet nothing troubles me less, as I never think about them'

CHARLES LAMB 1775-1834



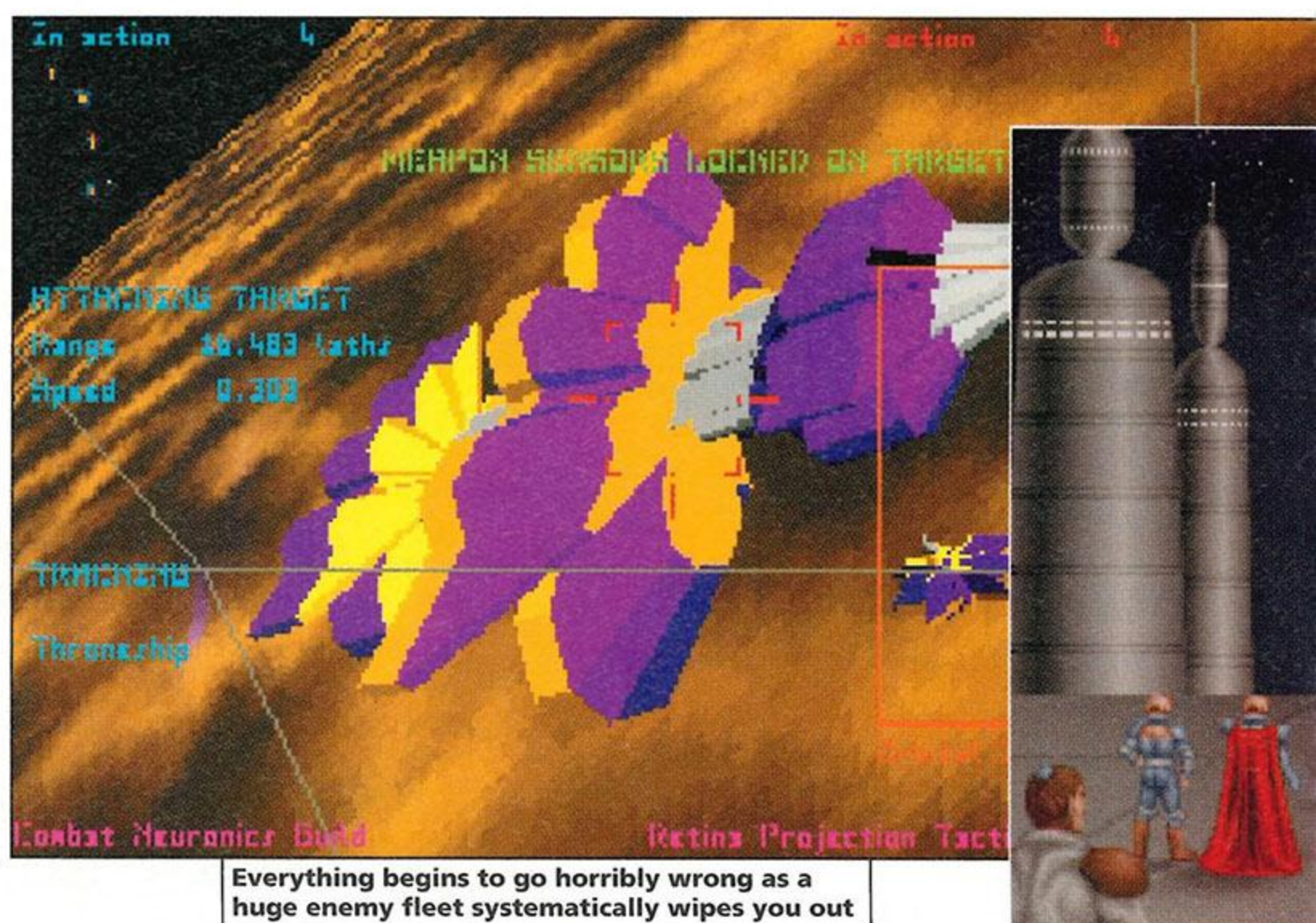
Potential space kings and queens are currently being well catered for. Frontier and Privateer have arrived, now MicroProse have a go...



The battle rages as the enemy begins to close in on the fleet under your control



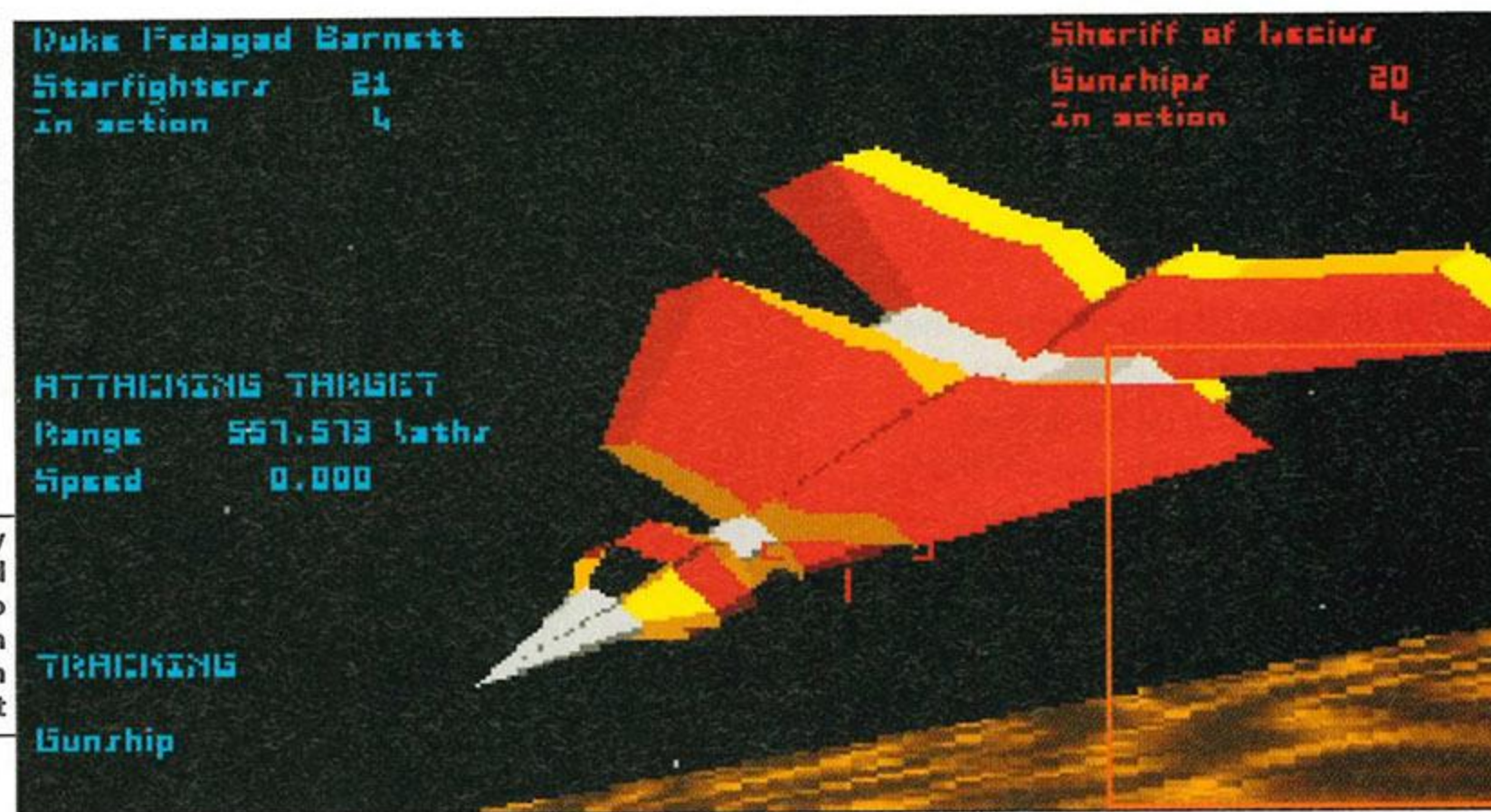
There's trouble on board as the engine blows. That's one ship less



Everything begins to go horribly wrong as a huge enemy fleet systematically wipes you out



Space disasters can destroy any hope. This meteor crashes into a ship and destroys it



An enemy Starlord wishes to engage in battle with your fleet

We've already revealed quite a lot about Starlord. The demo on the PC Action coverdisk will have given some indication of what the game is actually about. But there is far more to this than could ever be highlighted on a one-disk demonstration.

To some people, programmer Mike Singleton is a hero for his former titles. Lords of Midnight – soon to be released on the PC – and Midwinter 1 and 2 have all raised him up in the higher echelons of coding. A game will sell on his name alone, but surprisingly MicroProse aren't really hammering on this fact.

Starlord is actually based on the Play-By-Mail game that Singleton used to run many moons ago. The idea behind it was to conquer the entire galaxy, which consisted of 1000 planets and each one was controlled by individual players.

Play-By-Mail is an unusual concept as people decide what moves they make and send them through the post to the

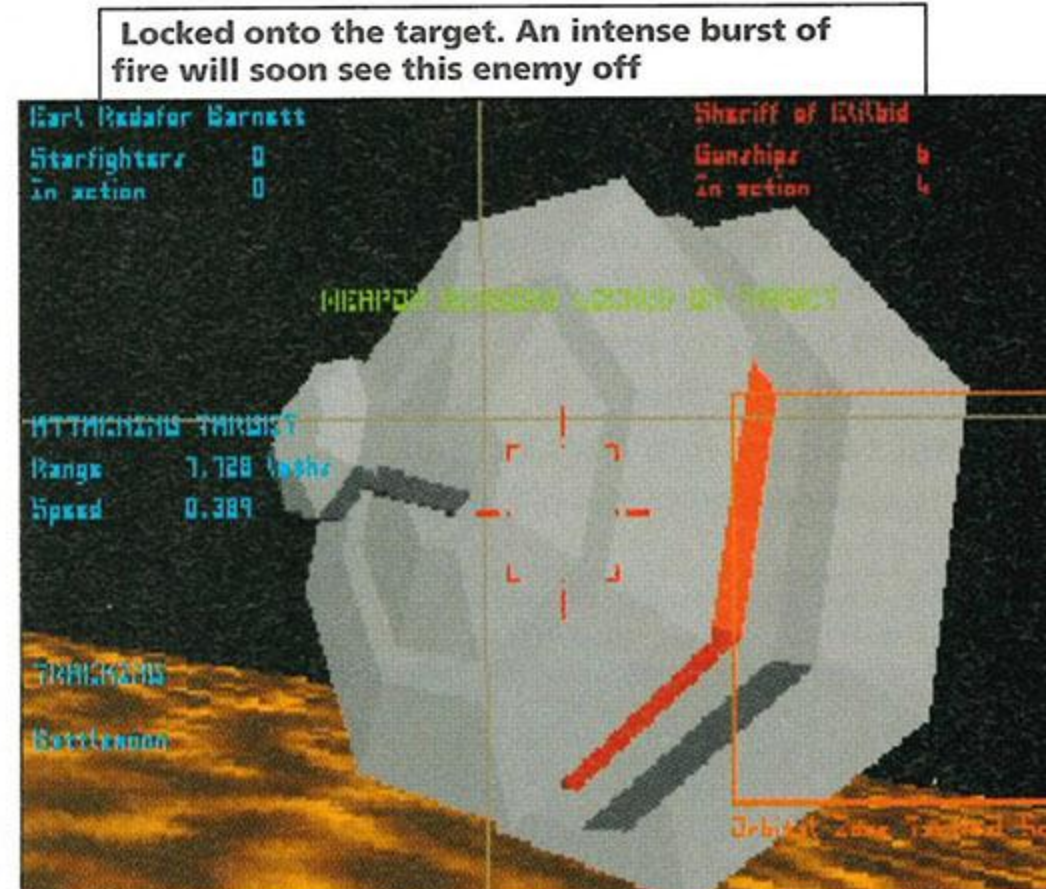
controller. When playing by this method, a game takes many months to complete. There haven't really been any successful cross-overs before as rules were generally too complex and the number of players was large.

In Starlord – the computer game – Singleton has attempted to include most of the features and all the players of his original creation. Obviously a huge task, but if anybody can do it then Mike Singleton can.

A quick glance at the game without having read the manual may well put the casual player off. A series of pull-down menus provide access to all the major areas. The way the Starlords themselves are structured about the universe is both complicated and extremely clever. The higher the rank of



A major explosion rocks a ship and takes it out of the battle that is under way



Locked onto the target. An intense burst of fire will soon see this enemy off

the individual commander, the more people he or she will have under their control. The Emperor or Empress for example have a vast army of allies to call on in battle. Some of these are from conquered colonies and others just family members and friends. Every other Lord or Lady has their own individual army. So everybody is answerable to somebody else and only a large number

of allies will allow you to realistically achieve the ultimate aim of taking over the universe.

There are two ways to go about things – peacefully or with a little more aggression. Even if you choose to talk rather than fight, there will inevitably be a host of battles to survive because not every Starlord sees peace as the answer. If an attack is on the cards,

'Is Starlord really just Civilization in space' ▶

A kidnapping gives the perpetrator a bargaining point with his enemies



Another Starlord bites the dust as an assassination attempt is successful. Better protection is in order next time

there obviously has to be a good way of representing the battle to the player. Not everybody who likes strategy games can handle the prospect of having to fight arcade style to determine the outcome. Thankfully MicroProse have included the option to have the machine decide the final verdict for you. When a

battle comes up, clicking on the correct button will bring up an information screen telling you what has happened. This may

seem a rather hit and miss way of doing it, but the battles are decided more or less on what the statistics say already.

If you choose to fight the battle yourself it means taking on more responsibility for the craft involved. Each Starlord can only have a certain number of ships. This is dependant on how

STARLORD (continued)

► the finances are going at the time. If supplies are allowed to dwindle then more forces will leave. This can cause a problem if it happens just before an important fight with a key enemy.

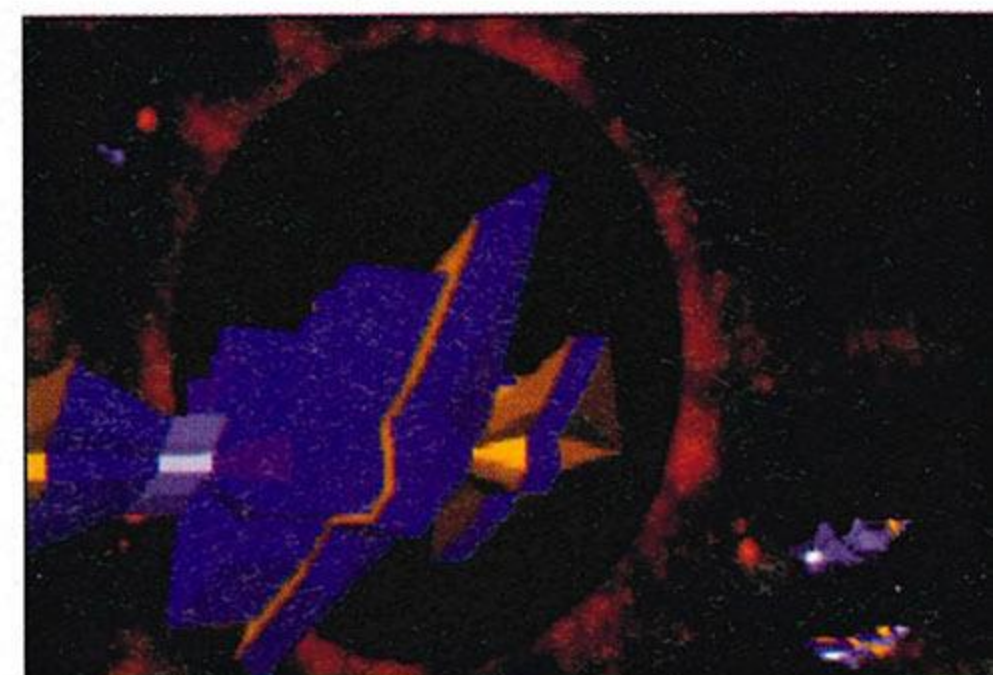
If the decision is to influence the battle there are again several ways of going about it. It can be conducted entirely on a strategy level where the ships are moved to set locations and told to do battle, or by an action Real-Time 3D section where all the fighting has to be carried out using the keyboard, mouse or joystick.

This is the section of the game that will impress people most. As our screenshots show, the flying sequences are second to none. If a fast PC is in use, the update of the screen is amazing considering the quality. The worrying aspect of this section though is that it's extremely tricky to work out what's going on. If you want to view the graphics and not worry about actually controlling anything, then autopilot can be left switched on. Turn it off and full control is handed over to the player.

The wandering nomads can cause a problem if they attack your fleet



The planet graphics are gorgeous but they can be turned off to speed up the machine



The Supernova is a spectacular flight as you fly past with the army

The nightmare comes true as a fleet gets totally lost in the wilderness of space

There are a myriad of different views which can all be accessed by the F keys. Some of these are really appealing as the ships fly past the in-space cameras. Without a doubt it is this feature that will sell the game, as these views are the ones everybody will see on the promo videos and in the shops. Starlord is pleasing to look at and everyone

involved with the graphics deserves the heartiest congratulations.

So how does Starlord combine its action and strategy sections together? Surprisingly well in all respect. It's certainly not Civilization, even though in some ways the ideas seem to be pretty similar. On the whole the



game holds everything in place quite nicely indeed.

All the planets can be visited and if a Starlord is already present, their ship will appear on your main viewer screen. Depending on what rank you are determines how far the ship can move throughout the galaxy. At the start only one planet can be jumped but as you get wealthier and improve the standard of your ship, greater distances can be

moved as the craft can then skip over intermediate planets.

All routes can be planned from the star maps as long as there is sufficient fuel.

Eventually, as word of your exploits spreads, you'll gain promotion within the hierarchy. The only thing then left to do is build an army large enough to



► or is that simply just a lot of wishful thinking?'

appraisal

After playing the 3D section I was extremely apprehensive. I'll be honest and say that I couldn't get into it at all. Once I got used to turning the real-time battles off I spent many hours playing Starlord. This is just what you need to while away some spare time. It isn't as good as Civilization, but then it's doubtful anything ever will be, maybe not in our lifetimes – but then there is always Civ 2 just around the proverbial corner. Graphically it's stunning and there is some quality playability in there too. Who knows, others may even be able to get well into the action sections, in which case there's a hell of a game waiting for them. Strategy fans will adore it if they take a little time to get into it. There are plenty of space games about now so why should you choose Starlord over the likes

of Elite 2 and Privateer? Well I'm not going to be the one who says you should. Each has its own merits and problems. One thing for sure is that there is definitely something for everyone in the shops at the moment. I liked this, but then I like the other two as well. Decisions, decisions! Certainly worth a look if your machine is up to it.

PAUL McNALLY

second opinion

When Starlord came in it was obvious that it was very strategy orientated. The only problem with something like this is that it can't, unfortunately, appeal to everyone. There's no doubting its pedigree. It is a very fine game that will be played by thousands of people but it will have to be run on a good little PC. A lot of patience will have to be applied before any great achievements can be made in the game. I'll be honest and

say it was too slow for me on a 386 – well the 3D sections at least – but to be frank I don't think many people will leave these on once the novelty wears off. The strategy sections are all fine but keeping track of what you are doing or getting any kind of idea as to how far on you are is quite difficult at times. The control is simple enough and once you learn the hot-keys, skipping through the screen becomes much less of a chore. Starlord isn't everyone's type of game. People will either love it or hate it. Frontier would be my choice for a space/strategy title but that shouldn't rule this out. Watch the charts come Christmas time and this, along with every other MicroProse release will be right up near the top of the tree. Singleton's reputation goes before him and, again, he has produced the goods.

SHARON GREAVES

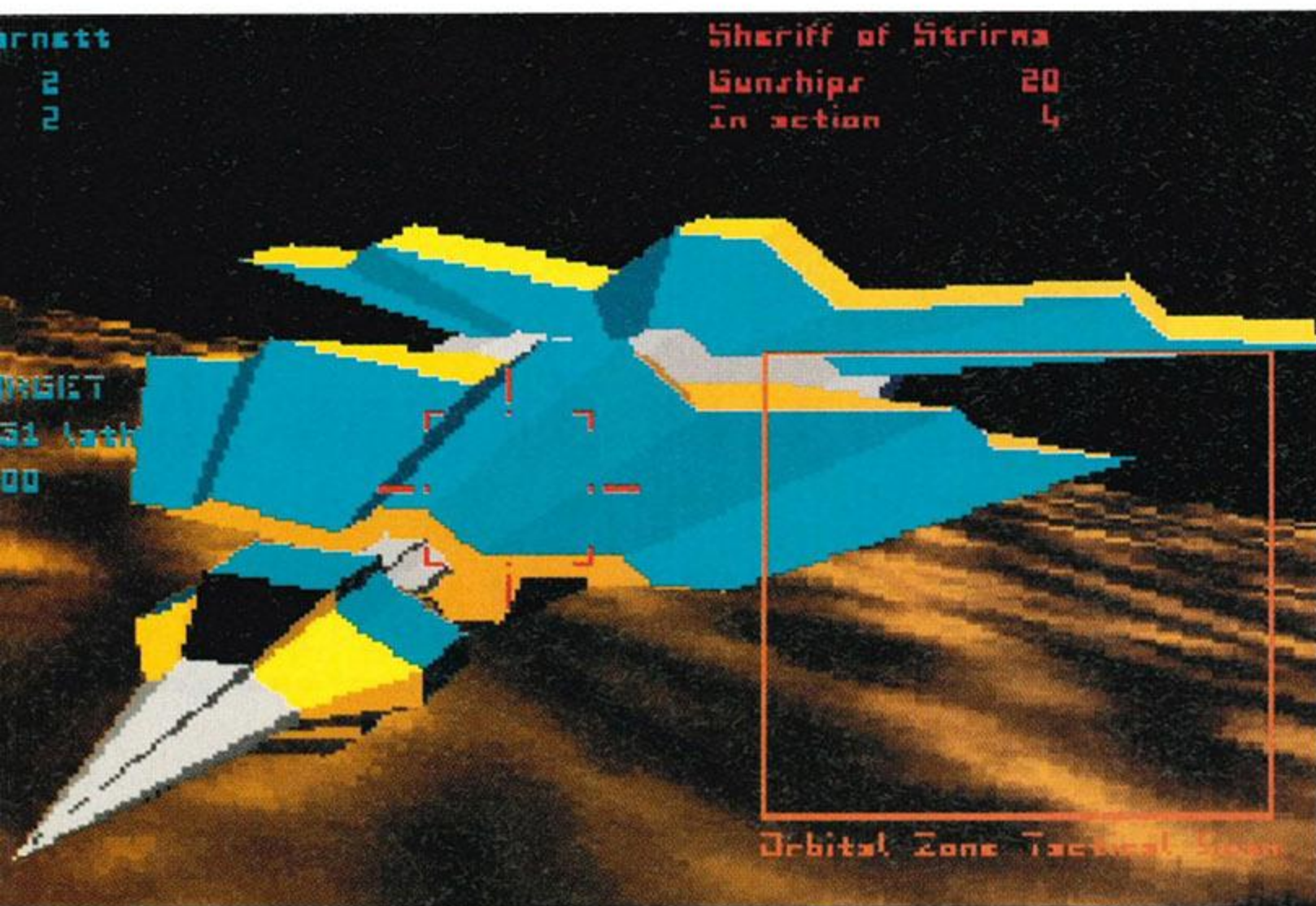
PCA SCORE **87%**



From the chart-room it is possible that a new destination can be plotted. This enables you to travel to the other stars in the solar system.

déjà-vu

Priateer is perhaps Starlord's biggest rival for all the wrong reasons. The similarity between the two games begins and ends with space. Starlord is much more complex in virtually every department and you'll have to decide for yourselves as to whether that is actually what you want. The Origin game is vastly playable and bears striking resemblances to the original Elite but has stunning graphics and effects to pep it up. Frontier aka Elite 2, is of course is the other challenger and its name alone will make it an instant seller to thousands of people waiting for the sequel of the century. The truth is there really aren't too many games which are similar to Starlord out there at the moment. Frontier has all the playability of the original and really shouldn't be missed as it is David Braben at his very, very best. There really is going to be a battle as a lot of people won't buy all three titles and it is unfair to suggest one over another.



challenge and topple the existing monarchy. The Emperor/Empress is constantly being overthrown. This brings its own problems because it is more than likely that at some point in the game one of your greatest enemies will be ruling the galaxy. Controlling everything is simple, especially if a mouse is used.

The menus can be accessed by clicking the right mouse button and then selecting an option. Swapping between the bridge and the chart room is the only real movement that is seen, until a strategic battle. There's plenty of strategy to get your teeth.

The most important thing is to have a fast machine. Things are a little slow on a 386 but a

486 really makes it all fly by. Don't expect another X-Wing because Starlord is not your average fighting game. Be careful to choose the right space game as the selection is growing larger.

The fleet in your control prepares for the greatest battle so far. The graphics enhance the whole battle

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BATMAN

PUBLISHER Gametek
CONTACT 0753 553445
TEAM Park Place
PRICE £29.99
RELEASE DATE Now

'One does not love a place less for having suffered in it'
 JANE AUSTEN

Often it's all too easy to get caught up in the hype of a film that evokes massive movie hysteria. Tim Burton's adaptation of Batman was a huge success and reaped the profits.

After the money that this film made it was inevitable that a sequel would follow, and follow it did. Batman Returns never achieved the same popularity of the first title but it did widen the scope for a computer game.

Now, more than a year on, the game is here, aiming to take the Caped Crusader out of the platform genre and into a more role-playing environment.

To achieve this transition you get seven HD disks in the package, most of which are packed with pretty atmospheric graphics. Seventeen MB of hard drive space will be occupied by the time installation has finished, so you may have to do a little freeing up first.

Now on to the game. You play Batman and your mission is to free

Gotham City of crime. BR follows the plot of the film quite closely. Oswald Cobblepot, aka The Penguin, is intending to discredit the Mayor and get elected himself.

His plan is quite simple. He has upped the crime rate by using his gang of former circus performers, who are randomly attacking citizens. With the election coming up the Mayor cannot afford to be seen losing control of the city. Batman has nine days to turn events around and thwart Cobblepot's evil plans to send the city into ruin.

What started off looking like an extremely promising point-and-click adventure soon slumped down in my estimation, as it gradually dawns that there isn't actually that much to do.

The perfect examples are the combat sequences. Where you might be expecting a bit of joystick waggling, you'll be surprised to learn that you

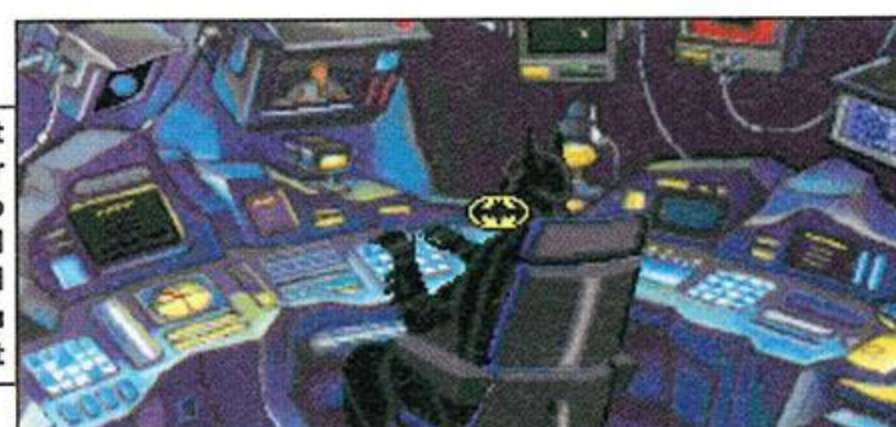


Ever since the camp sixties TV show, Batman has soared in the popularity stakes. With two Hollywood blockbusters tucked inside his tights he's ready to fly again



The Bat computer can help analyse all the criminal data you get

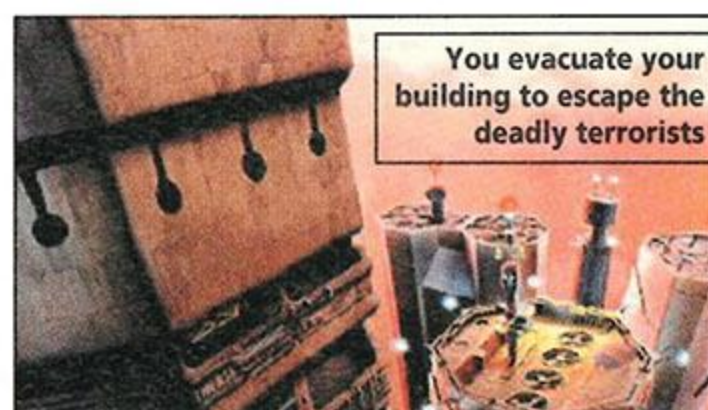
All the latest crime news is reported here for you



'It gradually dawns that

HOMEWORLD - GATEWAY II

PUBLISHER Accolade
CONTACT 081 877 0880
TEAM Legend
PRICE £34.99
RELEASE DATE Out now



You evacuate your building to escape the deadly terrorists

'Speak softly and carry a big stick' THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Legend are making quite a name for themselves in the field of text adventures. Not since the days of Infocom and Magnetic Scrolls in the eighties has a company produced a successful series of text-based pre-point-and-click games where you type the commands in yourself.

Technology and memory restrictions have obviously moved on now, so the emphasis tends to be on allowing the

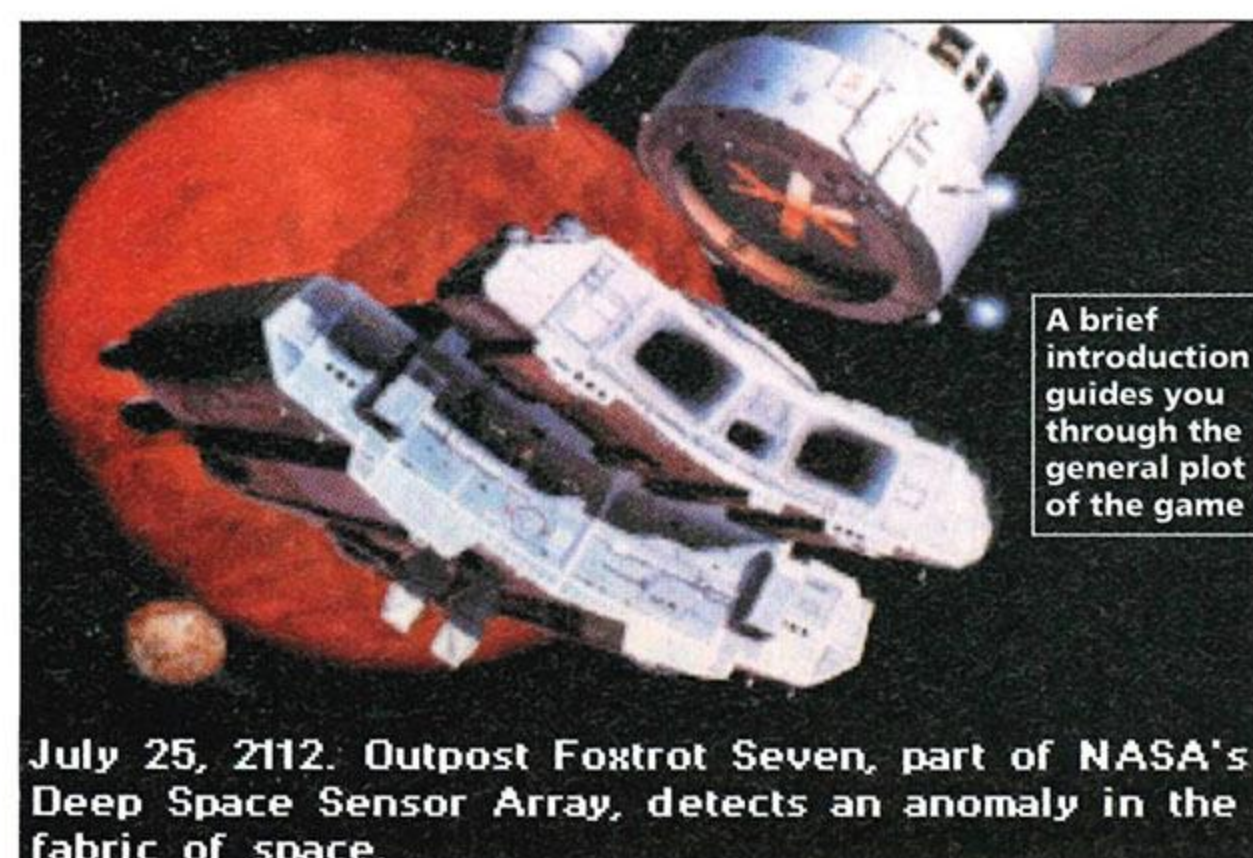
player to choose how to enter commands. If you are a traditional "I want to type the verbs in" style player, then that's no problem.

If on the other hand hunting around for the correct phrase really does become annoying then you can choose mouse control and select appropriate words from the lists that come up.

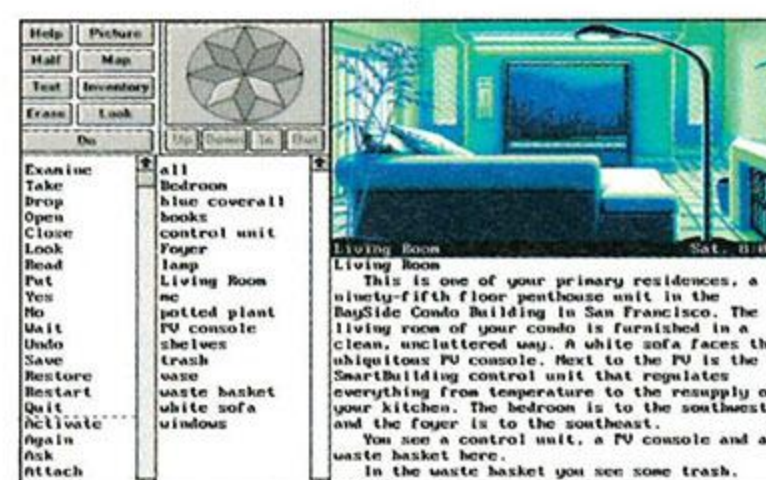
It still doesn't sound very exciting though does it? The general storyline goes like this. You are on the run from a terrorist organisation that has decided to assassinate you because of your prominent position on the new Earth colony.

Once you escape the initial confrontations you must find out who is after your blood and try and bring them to justice before you vanish without a trace. Homeworld manages to provide some pulse-racing moments with the inclusion of some race-against-time sections. For example, early on in the game you have to get out of the apartment building before a gang of

On a futuristic world there are more dangers than just the unexpected. Terrorism, corruption and espionage are all still rife...



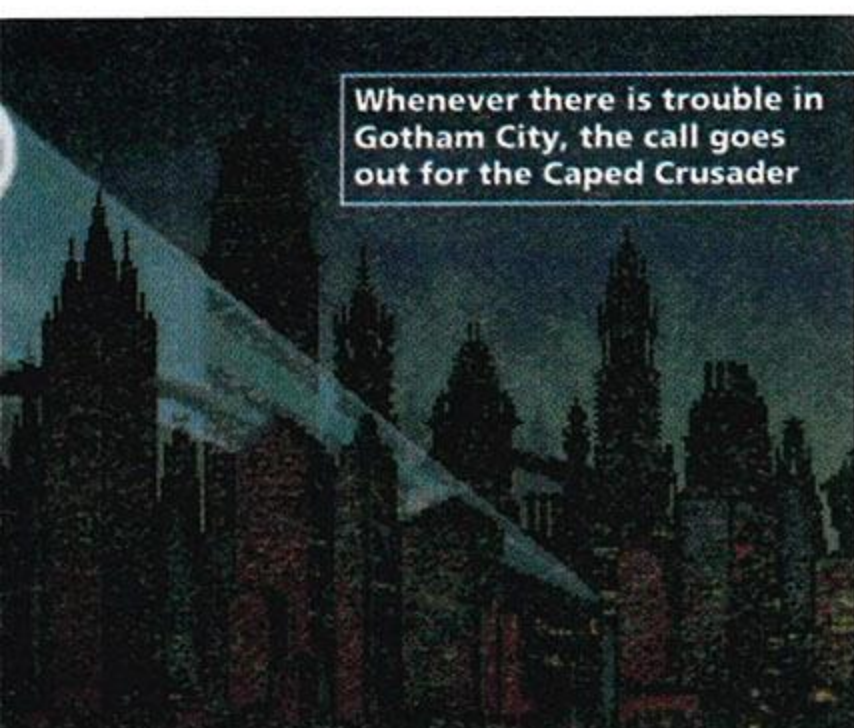
A brief introduction guides you through the general plot of the game



Your front room is where you start the game. Are you sitting comfortably?

'Homeworld provides some pulse-racing moments'

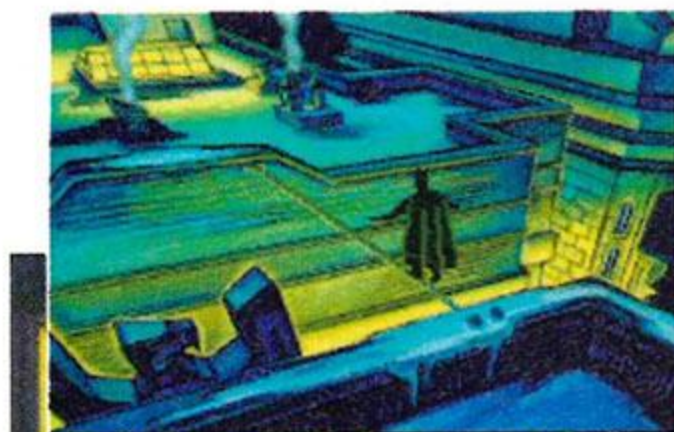
July 25, 2112. Outpost Foxtrot Seven, part of NASA's Deep Space Sensor Array, detects an anomaly in the fabric of space.



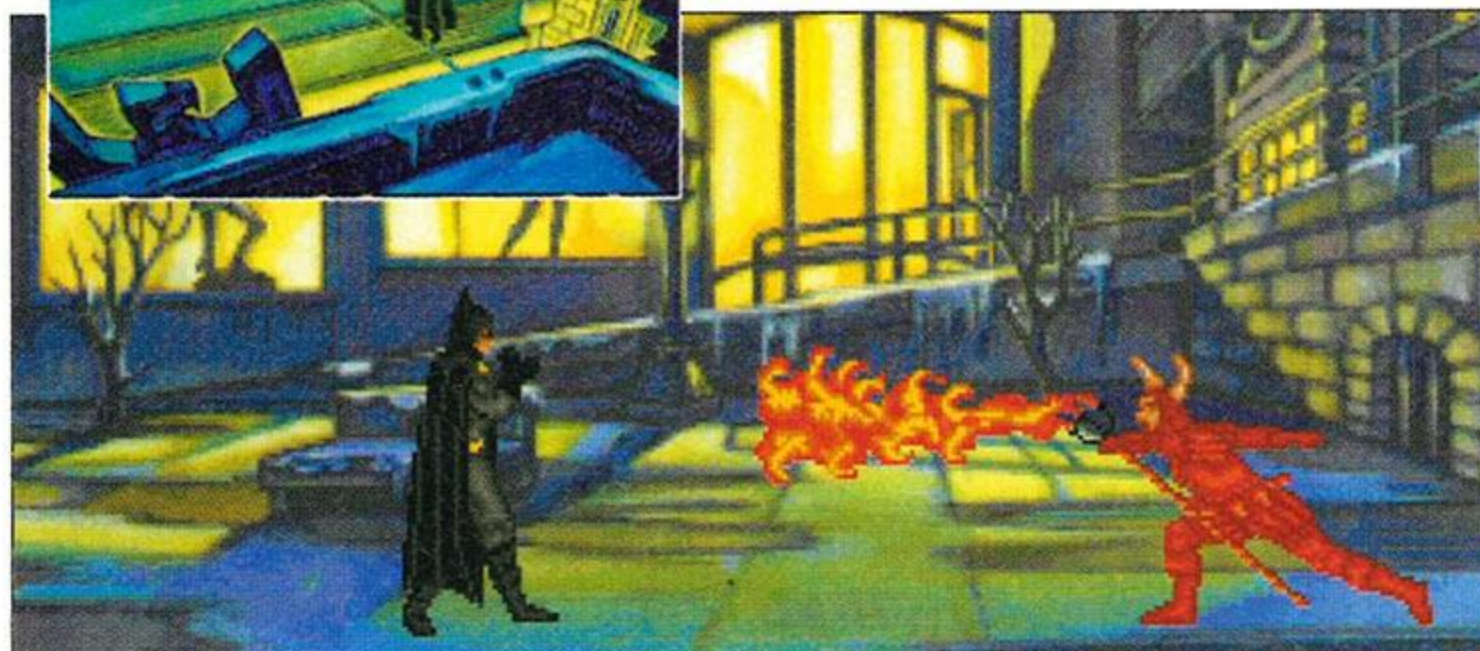
Whenever there is trouble in Gotham City, the call goes out for the Caped Crusader

don't in fact have to do the fighting – a little strange considering it's a pretty major section of the game. Combat is conducted by moving the mouse pointer and clicking over either the Easy, Normal or Fierce boxes to determine how you'll fight, then sitting back and watching the fight commence.

There can be two end results to a punch-up. Knock out the aggressor and he'll just lie there. Beat him/her into submission and you'll get the chance of interrogation. Other than fighting you



One advantage of being Batman is that you can travel via rooftops



Bat-like agility is called for to avoid this fire-breathing clown



Speeding around the city in your Bat-mobile is as simple as clicking on your on-screen map with the mouse!

data bank

MINIMUM MEMORY
2MB

MINIMUM PROCESSOR
386

OPTIMUM SPEED
12MHz

INSTALLATION
Essential

HARD DISK
17MB

GRAPHICS
VGA

SOUND CARDS
Adlib, Roland, SoundBlaster

CONTROLS
Mouse

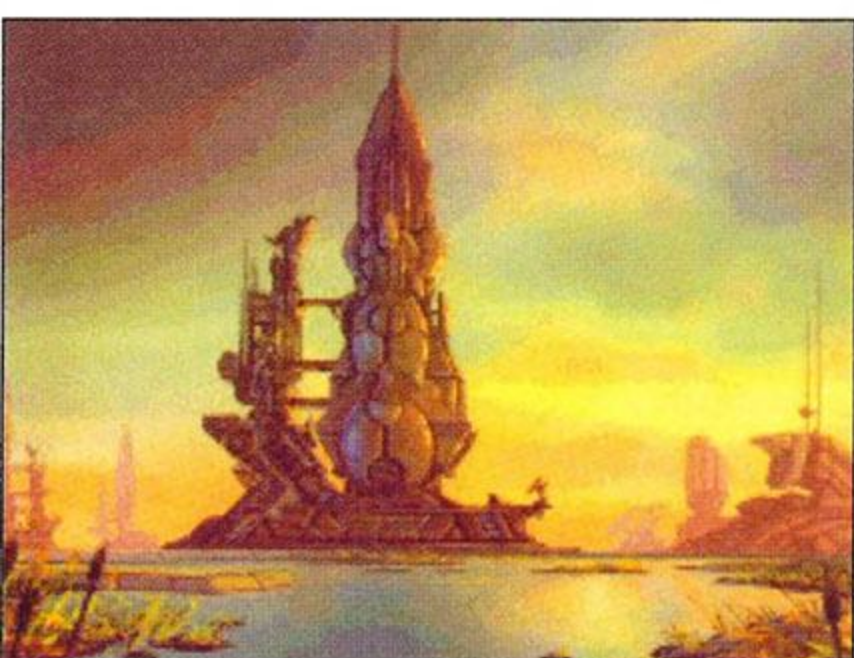
appraisal

Presentation can't be faulted and sound too is excellent, but perhaps more than a little gameplay wouldn't have gone amiss. You're treated to an exercise in prettiness and a definite hands off approach more than anything else. *Batman Returns* is a bit of an enigma, take a hard look first!

PAUL McNALLY

PCA SCORE **70%**

there isn't much to do'



Some of the cut-scenes are quite spectacular. Well presented indeed

maniacs arrive to kill you off. If you're too slow it's all over and it's back to a savegame. Whether you choose mouse operation or type in your commands, you only have a limited number of moves to get out.

Some of the puzzles in this futuristic setting are really quite difficult and you might find yourself getting caught out a few times. With *Homeworld* though, all is not lost as a hint book is included with the package.

A popular feature of this breed of game in the past was the fact that you had to map them so as not to get lost. *Homeworld* features a rather clever auto-mapping system which eradicates the need for countless reams of paper all

sellotaped together. Simply clicking on the map button will show you a diagram of your current location and all the surrounding ones that you have visited so far. If you wish you can leave the map on the screen rather than having the pictures there. Therefore, getting around those difficult bits is now far easier.

Graphically the art is restricted to the top right-hand corner, which can be turned off if you don't like. Occasionally there are cut-scenes which tell you what's going on and pass on important messages. If you're playing the game for the hundredth time you can quickly skip over these parts.

As with all Legend's games, the

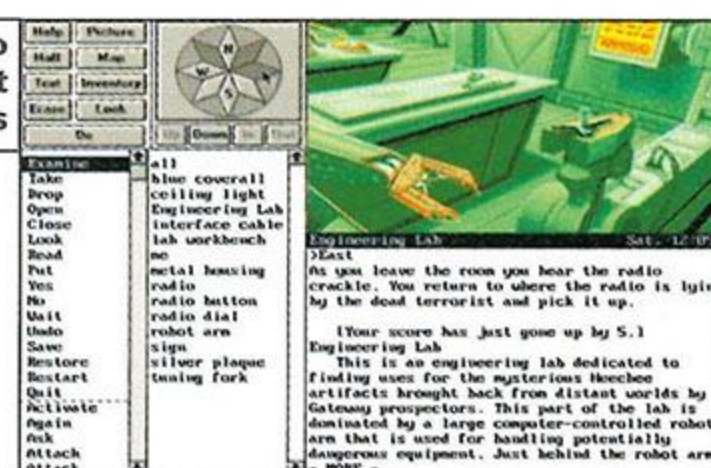
Your viewscreen suddenly bursts into life as you are warned that an attempt is to be made on your life by terrorists



The underwater scene on the large screen blinks out and is replaced for a brief moment by the Pacific Data Services logo and the words "PRIORITY OVERRIDE" in flashing red. A female voice says, "Your regional PV carrier, Pacific Data Services, is interrupting your access to the Net for an emergency communication as authorized under FCC regulation 2315-81. Stand by for an important message." Then a new image fades in: a man behind a huge desk, sitting in a majestic office in one of the 300 floor needle towers in New/New York.

The point-and-click interface works very successfully, but you can choose to use the keyboard if you wish

challenge is definitely there. So, if you want something a little less frenetic than most games you'll find it here. This is the old style brought up to date.



data bank

MINIMUM MEMORY
1MB

MINIMUM PROCESSOR
286

OPTIMUM SPEED
12MHz

INSTALLATION
Essential

HARD DISK
8MB

GRAPHICS
VGA

SOUND CARDS
Adlib, Roland, SoundBlaster

CONTROLS
Keyboard, Mouse

appraisal

the plot is easy to get caught up in. Trying to find your way around is aided by the auto-mapping system which you can use to access places quickly. *Homeworld* will provide plenty of

enjoyment for adventure fans and gamers just looking for something a little different from what they've been playing already. If you liked the *Spellcasting* series and *Eric the Unready*, you'll certainly enjoy this.

PAUL McNALLY

PCA SCORE **74%**

TFX (Tactical Fighter Experiment)

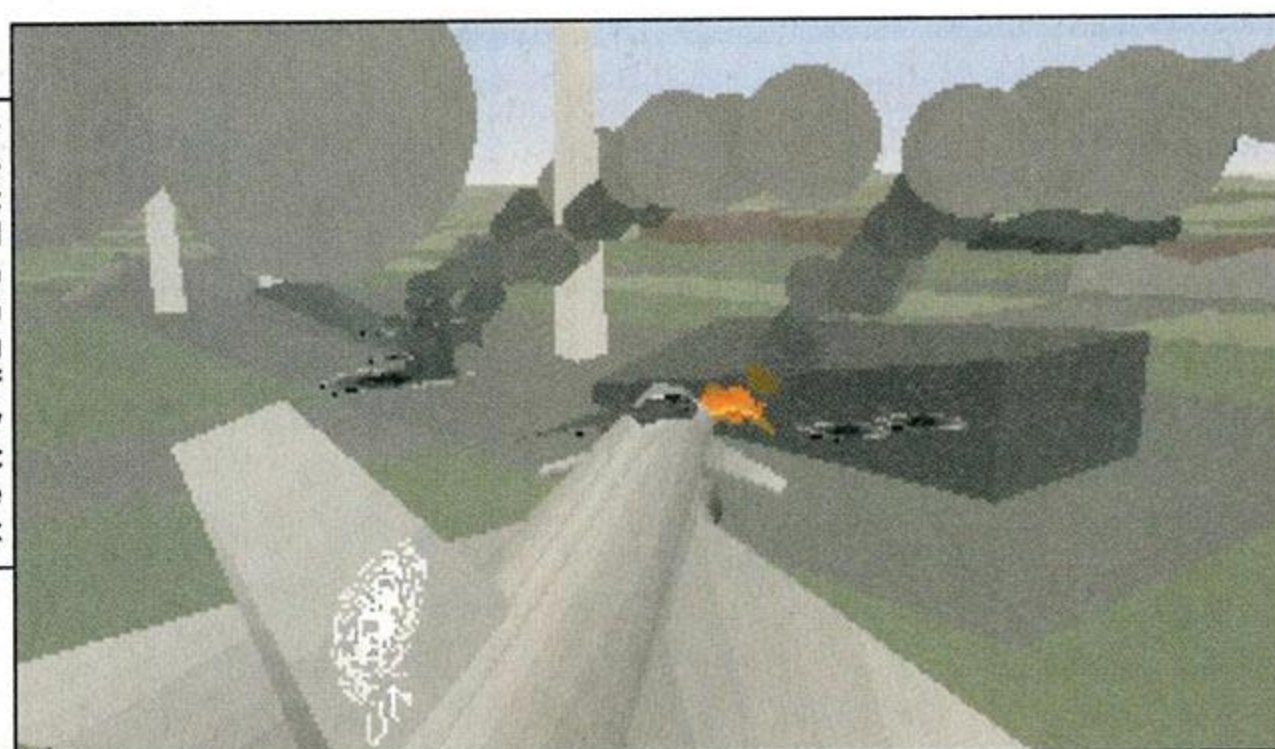
PUBLISHER	Ocean
CONTACT	061 832 6633
TEAM	DID
PRICE	£39.99
RELEASE DATE	Nov

The impressive Head Up Display certainly adds to the overall appeal of TFX



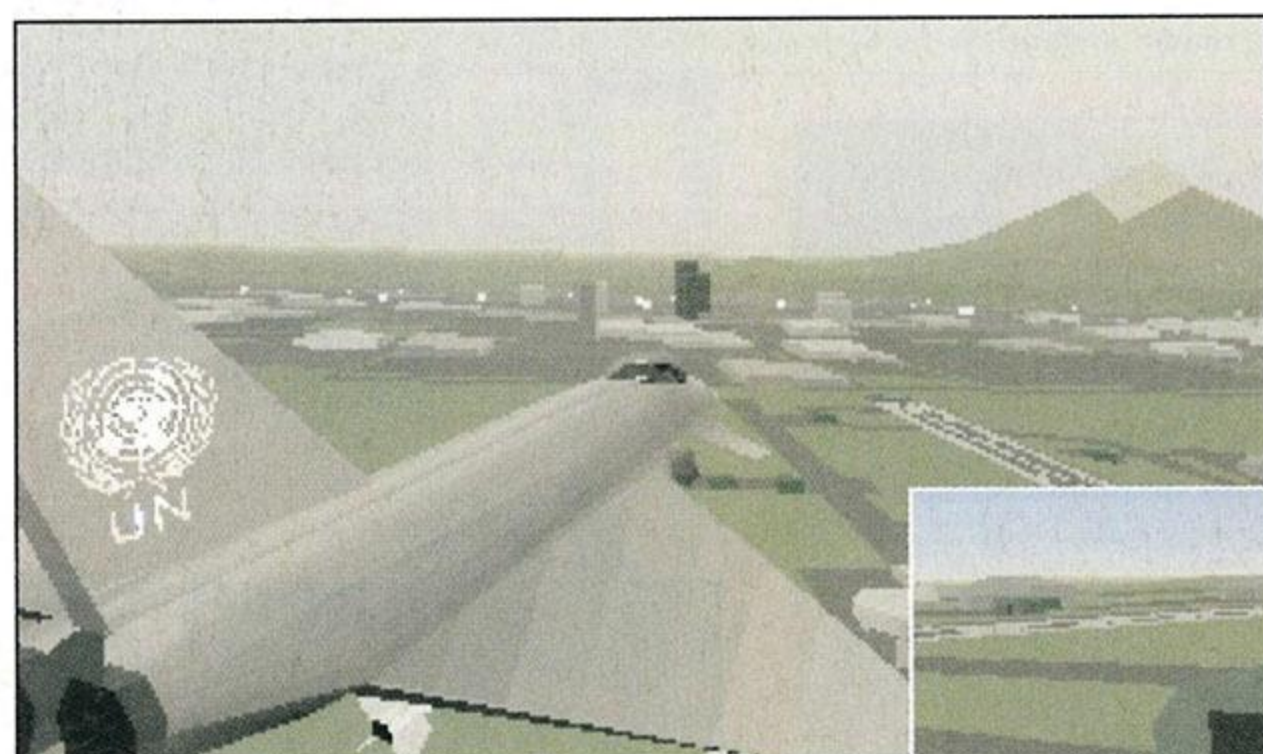
As the battle for the skies heats up, DID scramble their latest flight simulator TFX. But can it heal the wounds created by their previous Ocean games - RoboCop 3, F-29 Retaliator and, worst of all - Epic?

The missiles have hit target and the station explodes in a dazzling ball of flame. Now let's get outta here quick



'Heard the rattle of machine guns... and saw bullet holes appear as if by magic in the wings of my machine'

WILLIAM A BISHOP, CANADIAN ACE - WORLD WAR



The UN symbol on the wing maintains a flavour of authenticity



Missiles loaded, it's now time to commence the bombing raid

Taxying out of the hangar, who knows what dangers lie in store

Access to all your flight details is easily achieved by a simple keyboard command

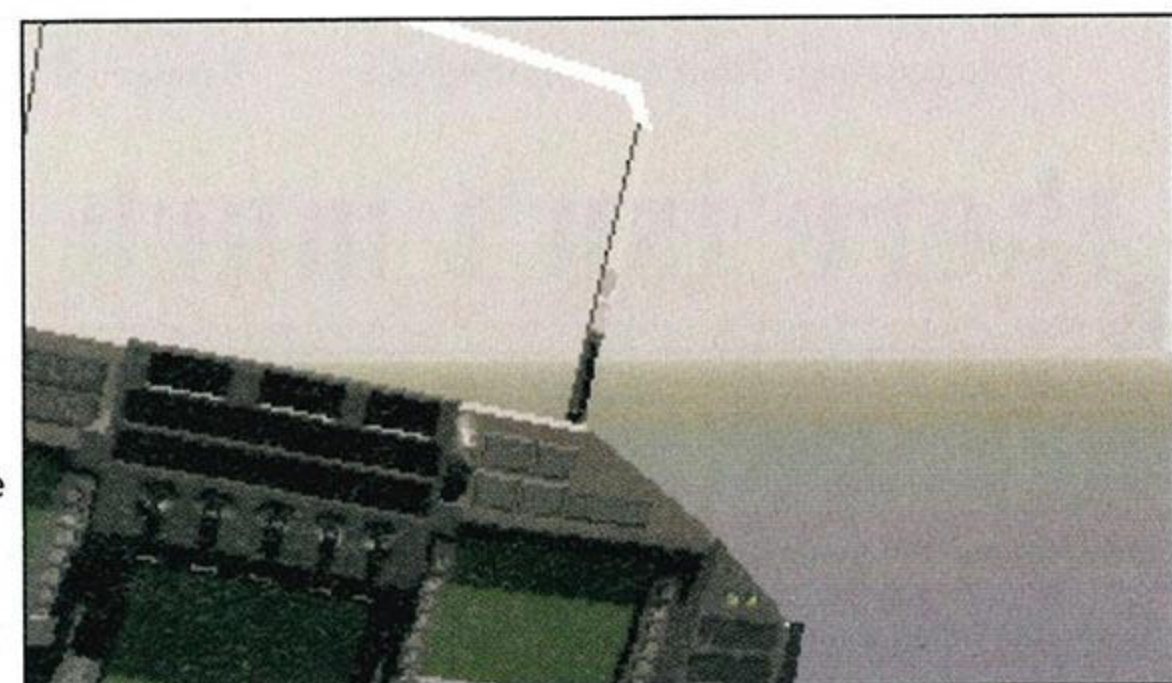
DID based in Runcorn have previously written games for Ocean Software in the form of Epic, RoboCop 3 and F-29 Retaliator. Apart from RoboCop 3 all these failed to gain any worthwhile recognition due to problems such as bugs.

But these initial hiccups have not dampened the team's enthusiasm for creating the biggest and best, and this certainly seems to be the case with TFX (Tactical Fighter Experiment).

TFX is a monumental game in which you get the chance to fly three of the world's most advanced aircraft in battle scenarios across the globe. The Eurofighter 2000, Lockheed F-22 Superstar and Lockheed F-117A Stealth Fighter, the only simulated plane actually in service, are all available to those players who think they can take the heat, no matter where.

TFX caters for those players who prefer the arcade elements of flight simulation and those who prefer to be immersed in the true flight

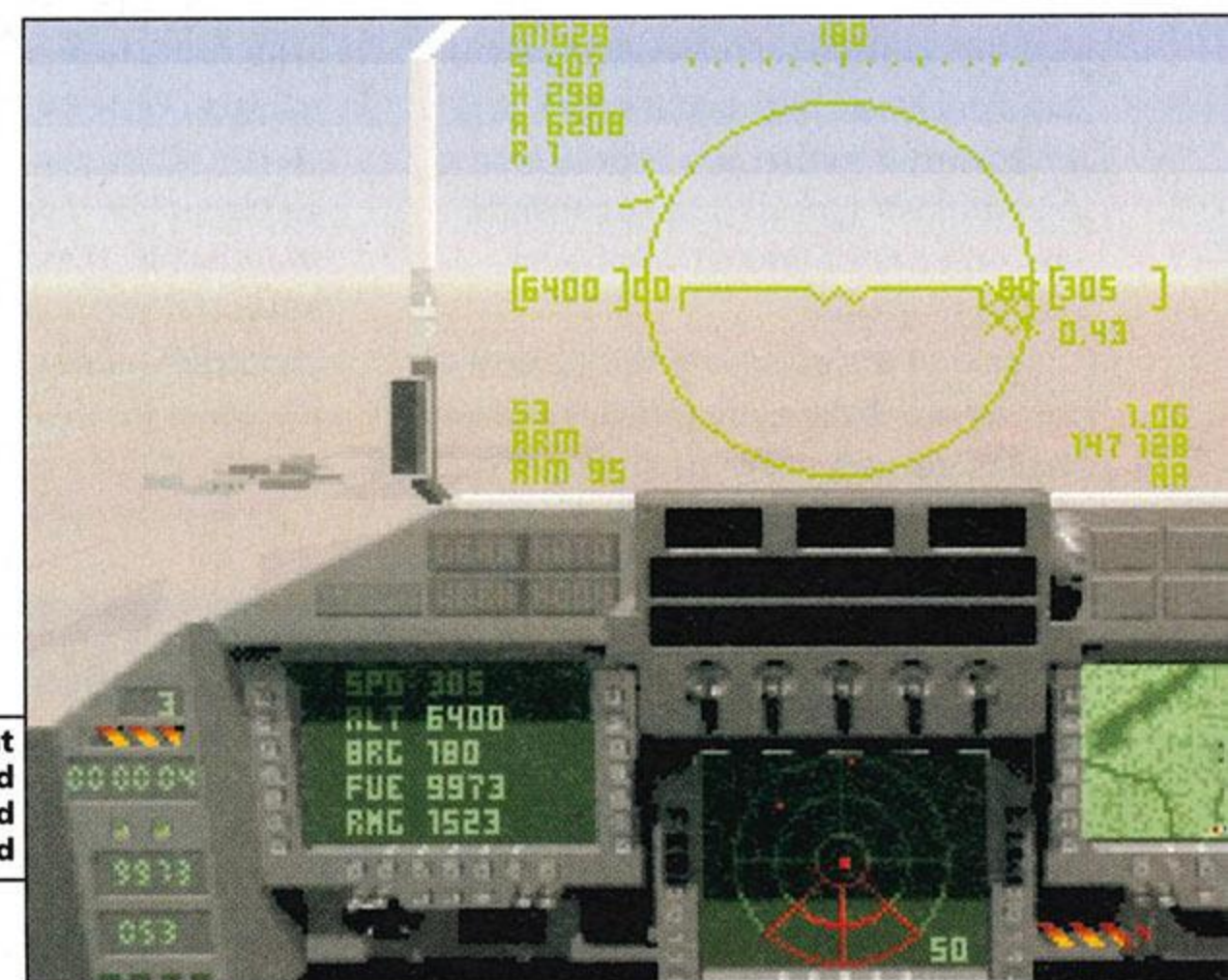
'The inclusio



The horizon looks clear so switch onto auto pilot and enjoy exploring the terrains below

experience where even the slightest mistake could mean capture or maybe even death.

Once a pilot has been created he can choose from several types of scenario including. Arcade-style action, UN commander - where the pilot can define and create his or her own missions, Training - for those a little nervous of

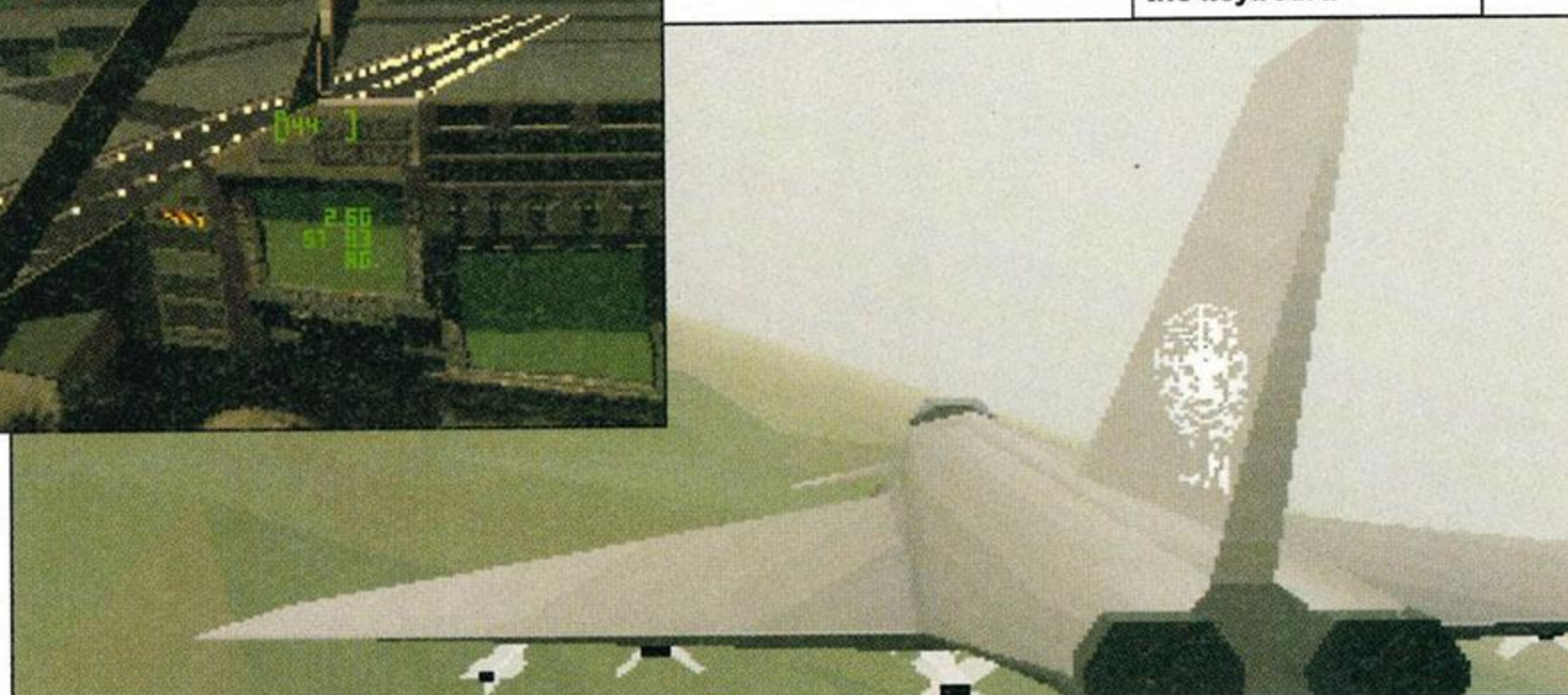




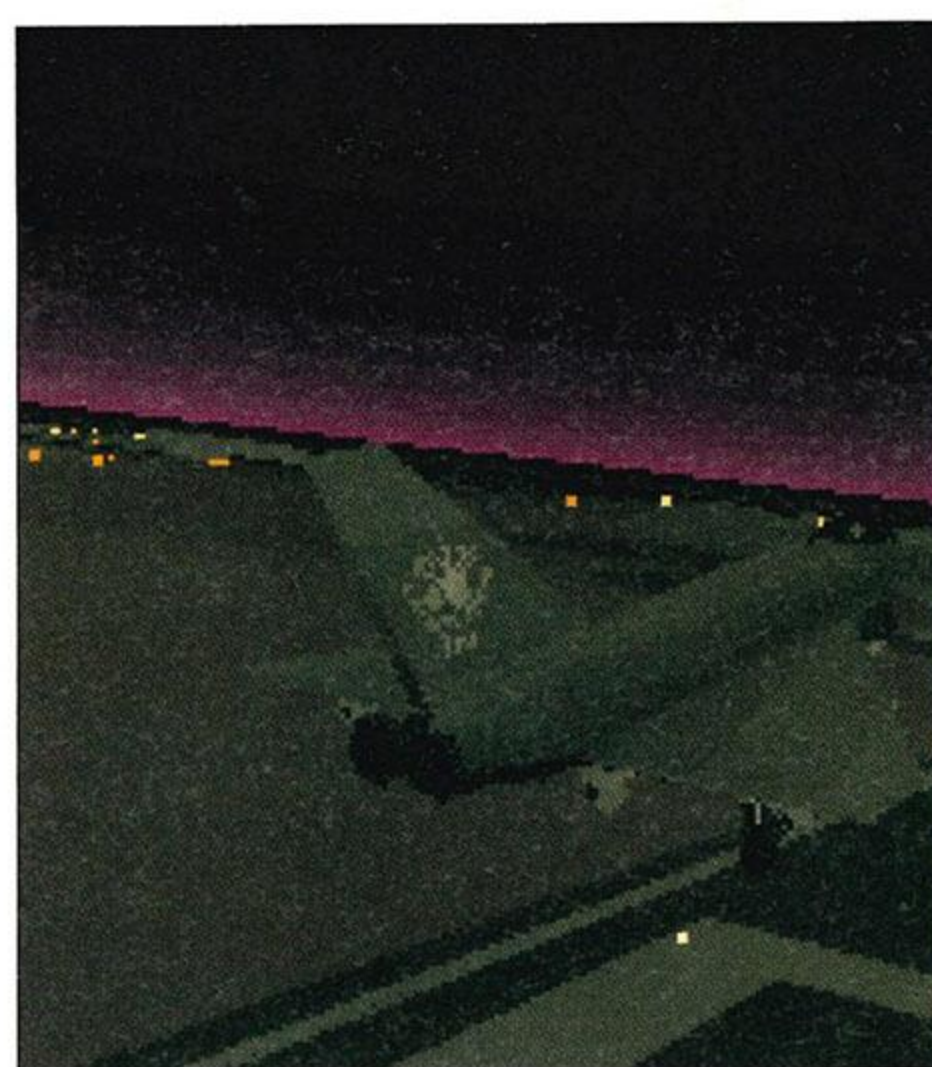
Night time flying can be just as exhilarating as that undertaken during daylight hours

Admire any number of exterior aircraft views by toggling on/off the F keys on the keyboard

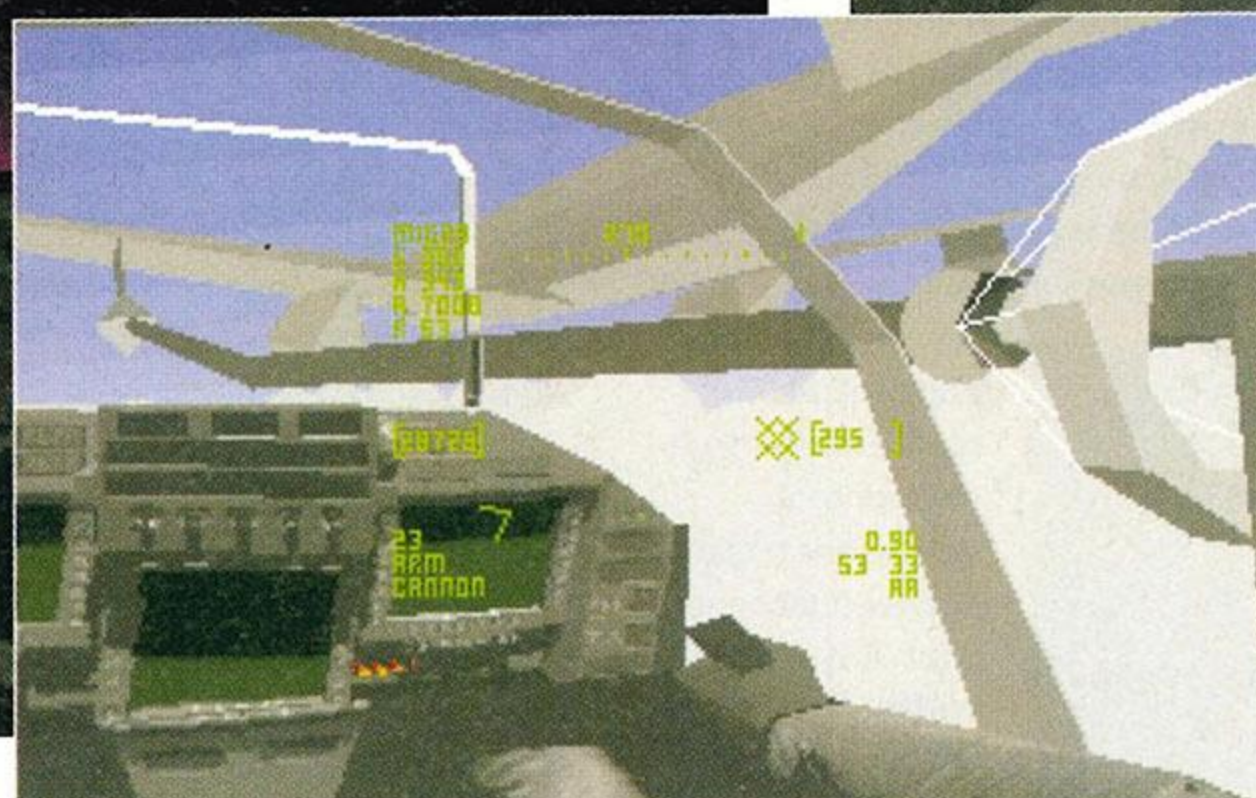
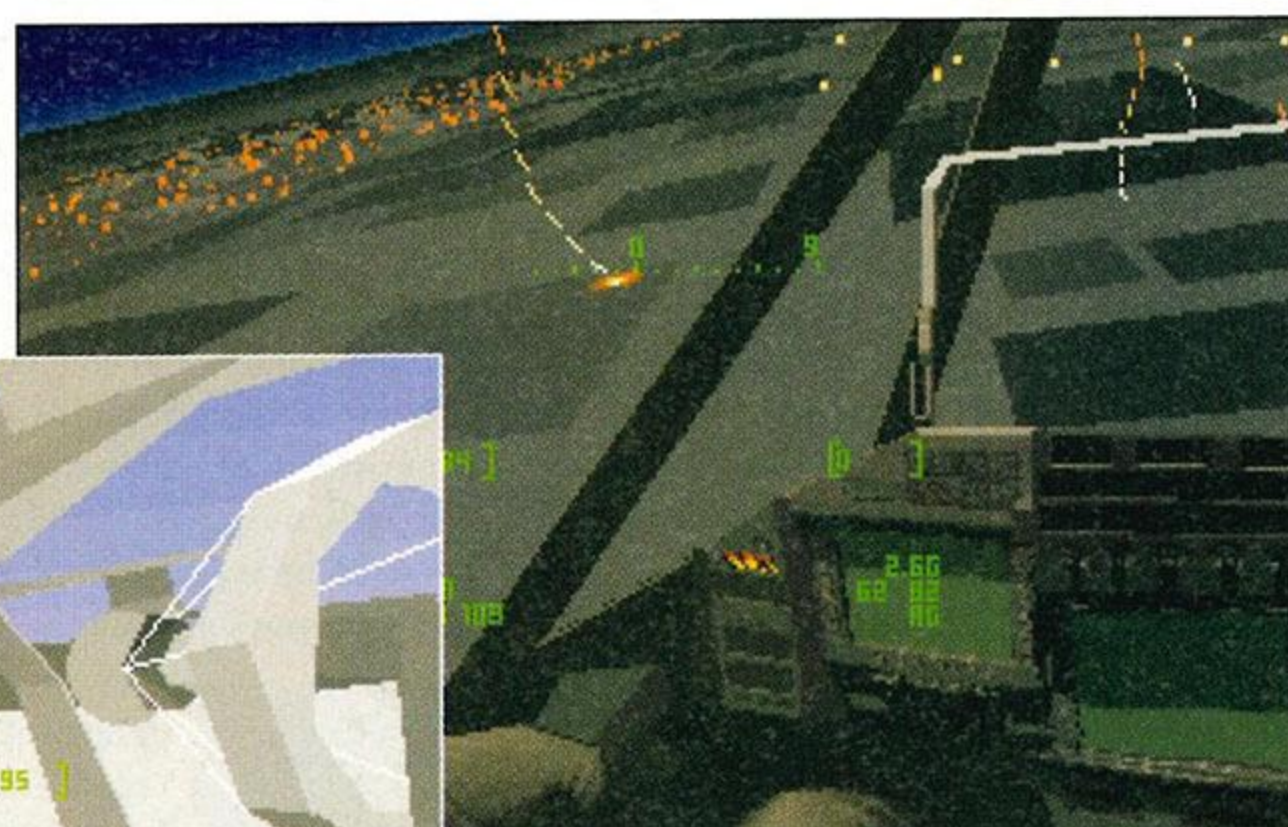
Missiles at the ready, prepare for an all out attack on the enemy site below



n of the Virtual Flight option is an exhilarating ►



The most important aspect of strike missions is getting home safely. But don't think it's all over yet - you've gotta' land your plane first



Refuelling takes place in mid-air; a tricky process requiring clever manoeuvring and a gentle touch

Nighttime bombing is precarious. You need to rely on your navigational instruments

combat and Flashpoints in which players partake in five true-to-life scenarios complete with animated news reports.

Flashpoints cover wide ranging areas. These stretch from Colombia, famous for its drug barons, to Somalia, where famine is rife due to General Mohammed Aideed and other warlords and Libya and Yugoslavia, where the war between the Serbs, Croats and Muslims still rages. The rules of flight can certainly differ according to which type of scenario you decide to choose, and certain types will only

be available to you when others have been completed satisfactorily.

There are seven distinct types of mission which feature heavily in most flight simulations and these are applicable to TFX. The mission types are: Interception, Air Superiority, Anti-Armour, Close Air Support, Interdiction, Defence Suppression and Maritime. If you don't like those available you can always define your own.

One of the most interesting aspects of defining your own missions as UN Commander is the implementation of satellite imagery. A vast amount of the world's surface has been accurately mapped in TFX and that includes rivers, valleys and mountain ranges. The mission planner is both easy to use and extremely realistic - you can even watch truck convoys move along roads, indicated by small lights. As far as

satellite waypoint creation goes TFX beats all others hands down. Once the pilot has selected his or her plane and mission, it's off to the weapons selection screen. Weapon screens vary little between flight simulation, but TFX features those natty little effects that just make it that extra bit special. There's a multitude of weapons to choose from and the actual plane can be rotated along any axis for the best view of the weapon's bays. Another neat touch is the cursor which has been changed from the customary arrow to a rotating fighter plane.

If you're unsure as to which weapons to load, you can always select the auto configuration which loads the weapons bays up with an assortment that should cover the mission directives. The weapons screen is the last port of call before entering the cockpit.

If you are in arcade mode the action

begins in the air near the primary target, while if in real flight mode you begin at your chosen base on the runway. The first thing you'll notice is the wealth of surrounding ground and structure detail which even Tornado from Digital Integration fails to emulate. High ground and structure detail is important for the location of the correct targets. Hitting an innocent target could result in court martial and the end of your career in the UN.

The cockpit displays reflect the type of plane you are flying and while there is a slight difference in the cockpit layouts of the different planes, most of the indicators and dials remain in the same place making instrument location fairly simple.

One of the most aspects of TFX is the incredible feeling of speed and height, even with the terrain detail ►



TFX (Tactical Fighter Experiment) (continued)

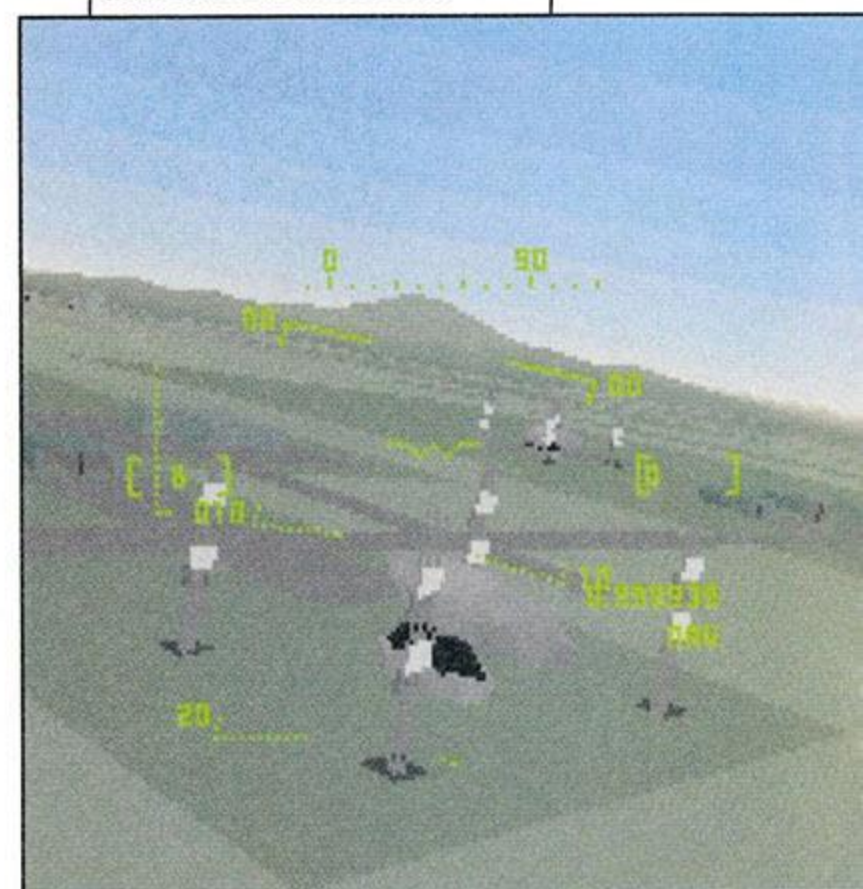


As night falls the secondary target is highlighted by an intense burst of AAA. Flying this low could prove dangerous but that power station must be taken out



Night missions get under way. Guide the aircraft via the lights on the runway

External views add another dimension to the ongoing flight. Sit back and admire from afar



► experience which nudges TFX closer to the real

► on full. This is certainly one of the most important elements of flight simulation.

Once in the air a wealth of options are open to you. TFX includes a plethora of external views including fly past, reverse zoom and the customary left, right, forward and rear views. Realism has been kept to optimum even in the external views – many past flight simulations simply used a filled circle to display the pilot in his cockpit. Not TFX, which features a fully garbed pilot complete with helmet, goggles and

oxygen mask. Likewise, the planes are highly detailed even down to the UN logo on the wings and tail.

No matter which type of flight level you play at, you are always allocated two kinds of flight control – cockpit flight and virtual flight. Cockpit flight is the basic cockpit view with a static pilot, while virtual flight features a bitmapped cockpit and pilot perspective. When the plane rolls, the cockpit rolls but your view remains level for a moment until eventually sweeping in motion with the

rest of the plane and cockpit. This replicates the true difference in movement response between plane and pilot. It is a function fairly difficult to explain without actually being there

but one that has never been done before and is unlikely to be done as well for some time. It is an exhilarating experience which nudges TFX closer to the real thing.

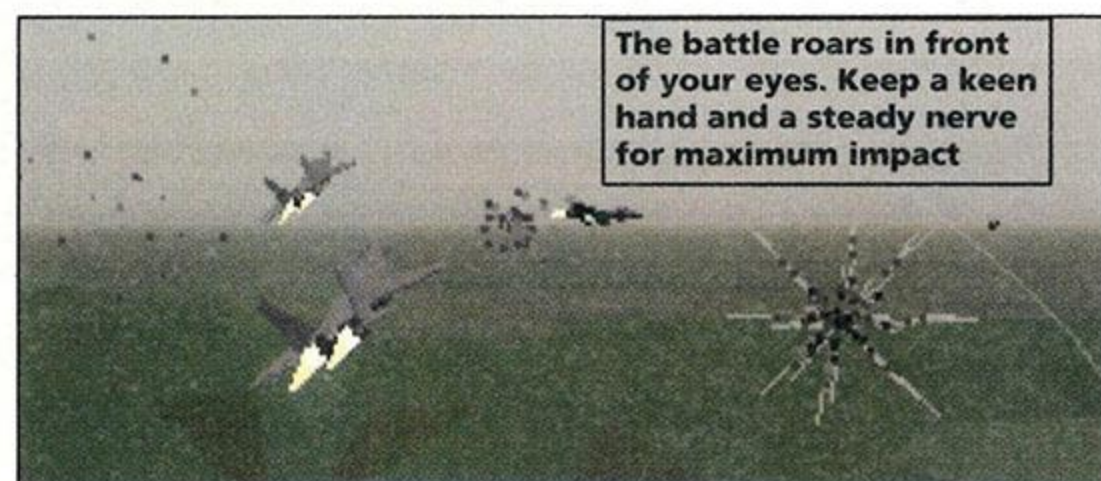
All the latest flight technology has been included, such as the ability to laser target structures from the pilots helmet and view camera shots from within fired missiles. Learning these techniques and the many keys associated with them can prove fairly daunting at first. But continued persistence soon pays off and the amount of keys and their location soon becomes second nature.

Combat in TFX is intense and exciting and certainly gets the old adrenaline going to fever pitch. Unlike other simulators, the enemy are tough, very tough and don't take kindly to you flying into their airspace and proceeding to kick their butts. As soon as you enter

the target area, tracers and AAA (Anti-Aircraft Artillery) begin to pound the skies around you. The best advice is get in, hit your target and get out quick. Hanging around too long in the combat zone might end in your untimely demise.

Bombing structures is intensely satisfying and nerve wrecking which certainly comes as a result of the incredible detail that TFX boasts. Even the explosions will make you gasp for breath. There are no simple lines in TFX but wonderful and colourful bitmapped explosions that make you shrink into your seat. Once out of the combat zone you can guarantee you'll be wiping the sweat from your brow. Put quite simply, TFX features all those little intricacies you would want to expect from a modern flight simulator.

If your base happens to be out in the ocean you will be expected to take off from and land on an aircraft carrier. Landings in TFX prove difficult at most times but on a moving ship that's when things start to get really tricky. But who cares because this is exactly what we want from a simulator – realism. And if you find that realism is somewhat of a problem you can always select easy



The battle roars in front of your eyes. Keep a keen hand and a steady nerve for maximum impact

appraisal

As far as modern fighter simulations go TFX has to be the best I have ever seen. After such poor games as F-29 Retaliator, RoboCop 3 and especially Epic it's good to see DID back and, indeed, back in such force. Tornado was definitely my favourite simulation until TFX came along. The game smacks of dedication and intensive research in all departments. Researching and simulating planes in prototype stage can surely be no easy feat. DID have pulled it off with gusto and vigour, and have come up with a game that is technically quite superb. The Virtual Flight option has to be seen to be believed and is a major leap forward in the continuing drive to simulate the real thing as much as possible while still making it an enjoyable gaming experience. It is amazing that so much

intensive detail on the ground and buildings has been incorporated without any reduction in speed – an indication of the programming excellence of DID. The fact that they have managed to accurately map most of the world's surface is a major achievement in its own right. If modern flight simulations appeal to you, then Tactical Fighting Experiment is certainly one of the, if not the best to date and I really can't see it being beaten for quite some time to come.

STEVE WHITE

second opinion

The sheer amount of graphical detail in TFX just clobbers you. Right from beginning to end, the game boasts some of the most lavish visual effects yet to be witnessed on the PC. The UNN emblem on the aircraft wing, the effects of night time flying, soaring through the clouds, tricky

refuelling operations conducted in mid air, the thousands of square kilometres mapped out from areas of the world as diverse as Yugoslavia and South America... you could go on and on. These are just a few examples that only serve to indicate that minute attention to detail really is second to none in the game as a whole. Running parallel with this, the different gaming options give the player total freedom of expression. Whether it be arcade style action, tours of duty or training that appeals to you, all the best and varied elements of flight simulation have been combined into one package to come up with a complete gaming experience that oozes originality and dedication. While the game brags some of the fastest and smoothest 3D ever, gameplay has not suffered as a result.

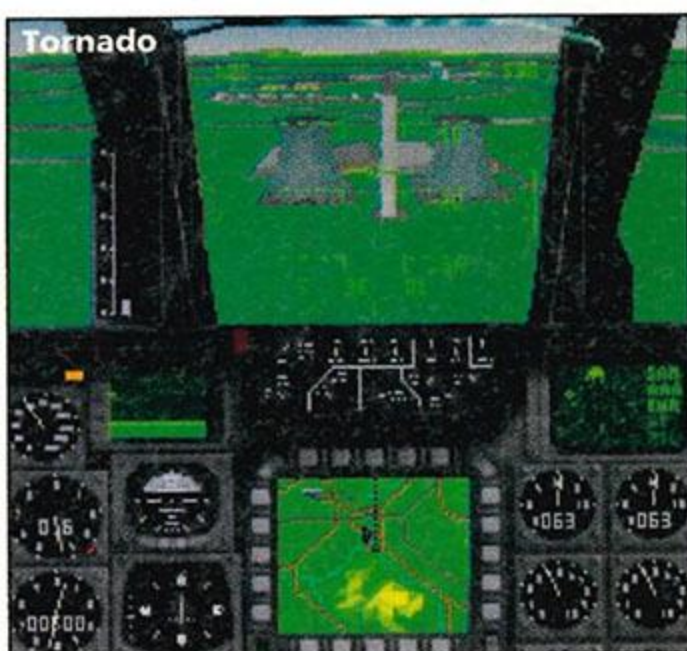
SHARON GREAVES

PCA SCORE **90%**



déjà-vu

tFX's greatest rival has to be Digital Integration's Tornado which received much critical acclaim when it was released a few months back. Flying the Panavia Tornado for the RAF, the player must complete several missions from around the world utilising the Tornado's low-level flying abilities to the utmost. Graphically it is quite superb with great attention paid to ground and structure detail, and the exhilarating feeling of great speed at low-level is amazing – something which is fairly difficult to emulate. It is unfair really to directly compare Tornado and TFX as both will immediately look attractive to flight simulator addicts mainly due to the simple fact that they emulate different planes. But if one were really forced to make comparisons, then TFX would have to take the prize due to its technical elegance, innovatory nature and vast array of gaming options that look to cater for any standard of player and any kind of gaming mood. But, all said and done, both are highly playable.



thing'

Even when flying at low level, the ground and buildings still whizz by at a frightening rate. The best advice is to hit the target and get out. Wasting time can result in being shot down



flight mode. Mid-air refuelling is also available and on the whole quite spectacular. This process involves lining up behind a fuel carrier and placing the receiving nozzle on the nose of your plane into the carrier's trailing fuel line. Great skill is required to maintain the correct speed and heading with that of the fuel carrier.

TFX is definitely one of those games that once mastered will have you hooked for a very long time. With a wealth of missions and the ability to design your own, its longevity must surely supersede those who would claim to be its competitors.

A group of warehouses representing an industrial site are soon to become toast

data bank

MINIMUM MEMORY
2MB (rec 4MB)

MINIMUM PROCESSOR
386 (rec 486)

OPTIMUM SPEED
33MHz

INSTALLATION
Yes

HARD DISK
12MB

GRAPHICS
VGA

SOUND CARDS
Adlib, Roland, SoundBlaster

CONTROLS
Mouse, Joystick, Keyboard

LADIES
AND
GENTLEMEN
PLEASE
FASTEN
YOUR
SEATBELTS,
WE ARE
ABOUT TO
TAKE OFF

TRODDLERS

PUBLISHER	Storm
CONTACT	071 585 3308
TEAM	In House
PRICE	£29.99
RELEASE DATE	Now

'The mob has many heads but no brains'

17th CENTURY ENGLISH PROVERB

Time can often be a great distiller and it would seem that the halcyon days of Lemmings lookalikes making major inroads into peoples' lives are far from over



The scenarios become increasingly complex and brain numbing

the screen while in other instances you have but four to use wisely.

Superglued to any type of surface, the troddlers demonstrate real gravity defying techniques as they

faithfully follow every contour and traipse around every bump.

Often you may have to build stepping stones right to the top of the screen in order to make them about turn and head the right way.

Other screens may simply require forethought, followed by the skilful placing or removing of a cluster of bricks to cut off their route and bring them swiftly marching to order. In total there

Lemmings, 1991 software game of the year forced the gaming fraternity to rise to its feet and give a resounding pat on the back to the combined creative talents of DMA Design and Psygnosis.

And now Storm's latest offering involving ridiculously gormless rodents traipsing from here to nowhere is preparing to ride the crest of this roller coaster of a wave.

Although first impressions of Troddlers may perhaps give that erroneous feeling of stepping back into Lemmings country, only certain aspects have been plundered before being resurrected to engineer a brand new product. A product that shines in its own right yet still holds that uncanny familiarity to let you know when you're onto a good thing.

The basic premise is that you have to guide a bunch of troddlers to an exit by building up a number of stepping blocks, placing and moving them around the screen, in a bid to capture the troddlers and thus direct the flow of the tribe's movement.

Sometimes there's a huge stack of blocks to manoeuvre around

Pick up fruit for bonus points and extra energy to complete the task



Nice and easy does it. Plenty of blocks and ample time to use them in



In later levels fans are out to make your little bods into mincemeat

Should a troddler get trapped, just remove the block and begin again

block building, the game does then begin to branch out.

Different coloured gems may have to be collected, rocks need to be toppled off ledges to make them explode, and there even comes a time when grinders revel in a spot of troddler mashing.

Subsequently your guiding hand sprouts far more multi-purpose flexes in an effort to keep the troddlers away from potential danger.

The enforced time-limit too becomes increasingly restrictive but bonuses in the form of clocks, hearts and invincibility shields give time for a breather.

Graphics are hardly glamorous and neither are the rodents overly appealing but how long they keep you glued to the screen is what really matters.

It's shame that no humour has been instilled into the package to make it more enjoyable and longer lasting.

are 100 levels to wrangle through in one player mode. The two player mode exists on two planes. On the one hand you may undergo a full blooded team operation whereby you both work simultaneously through 60 levels, while on the other you cross the war threshold. As the screen divides into two, you both set out to be the first to recoup all the very small and perfectly scatterbrained rodents.

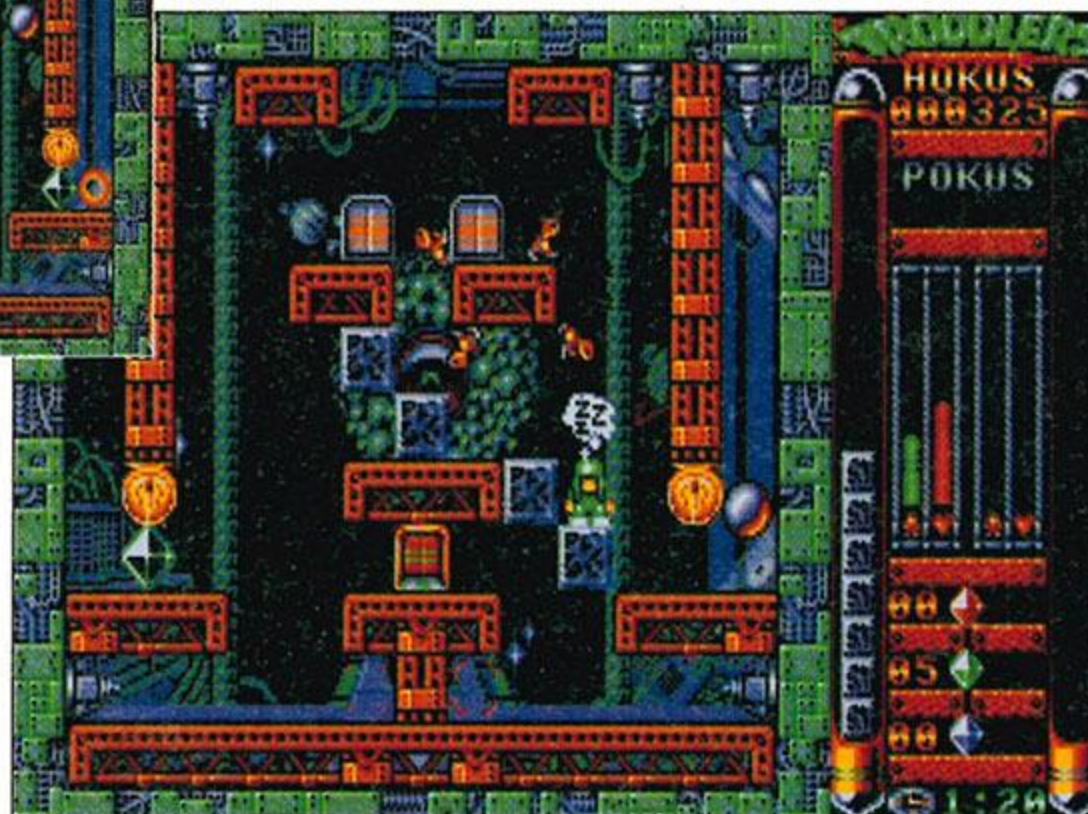
The going is relatively easy in early stages with a generous time-limit and screens on which literally no forethought is demanded. But you only need make major advancement when suddenly the smugness you've been feeling is wiped clean out of existence.

Rather than becoming tedious, repeating the same formula and adhering to a solid stone structure of

'shines in its own right'



Often the goal may be to collect an array of on-screen items to advance. Here, you need to pick up green gems as well as play the saviour



Getting on with their troddling, your minions need some firm direction

appraisal

A nicely polished and beguiling game which boasts a well adjusted learning curve that really does crank your brain into warp drive in later levels. It doesn't have the hypnotism of Lemmings, nor as much spirit, and neither does it present even a trace of chuckle worthy

scenarios. But it still comes in as a pleasant second rate game. Troddlers is not so much an experience that threatens to take over the routine of your daily existence but more of a sequence of puzzles that can be plugged away at in small doses.

SHARON GREAVES

PCA SCORE **79%**

data bank

MINIMUM MEMORY
580k

MINIMUM PROCESSOR
286

OPTIMUM SPEED
12MHz

INSTALLATION
Essential

HARD DISK
1.5MB

GRAPHICS
VGA, EGA

SOUND CARDS
Adlib, Roland, SoundBlaster

CONTROLS
Keyboard, Mouse



NETWORK Q



RALLY

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FLIGHT

SIMULATOR



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*This rally sim's so lifelike you can almost smell the high-octane fumes. "We have lift off!" Just what you **don't** want to hear from your computer co-driver...*

He's screaming pace notes above the shriek of the engine... you're pushing it to the edge in the final thrilling stages of the Network Q RAC Rally.

You're strapped into one of the five rally-bred supercars, speeding in the exact tracks of the '93 Rally leaders. Each car handles differently. Each tests your driving skills flat out.

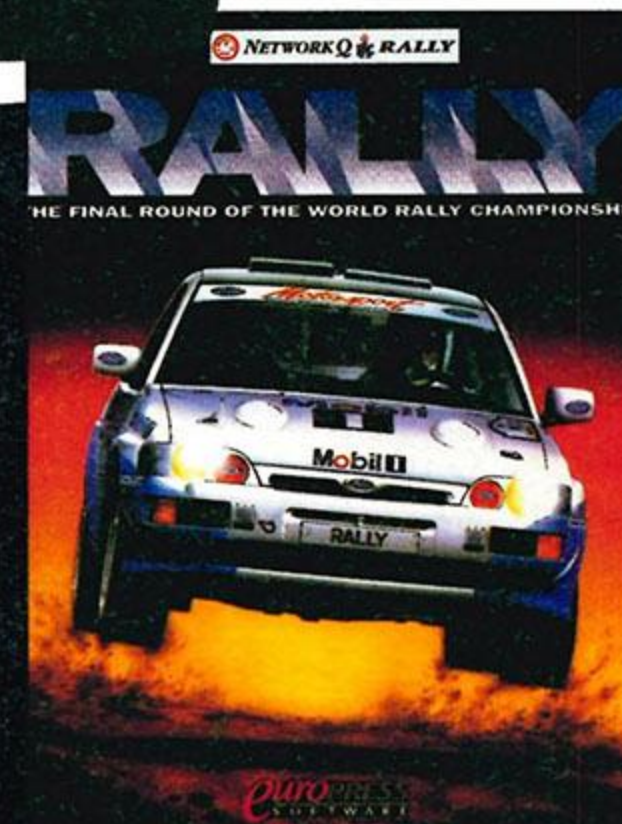
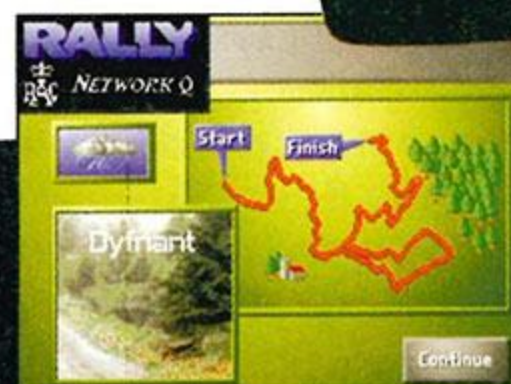
You're picking up vital seconds when you hang a bend late, clip a bank and flip into a roll – damage your car and you dent your chances.

*It's the sequel to the top-selling RAC Rally game. But the sound's even more deafening, the digitised video graphics even more *in your face* for an atmosphere that's totally turbo-charged.*

Flying around the world's toughest rally course is one thing. Staying on earth is another.

WARNING: CRASH HELMETS NOT PROVIDED.

Available for PC, Amiga. PC screen shots shown.



EUROPRESS
SOFTWARE
CREATIVE LEISURE

Europress Software, Europa House,
Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP.
Tel: 0625 859333 Fax: 0625 879962

© Europress Software 1993

SIMON THE SORCERER

PUBLISHER	PDQ
CONTACT	021 625 3377
TEAM	Adventure Soft
PRICE	£39.99
RELEASE DATE	Out now



The owl, the master of wisdom, can give you tips should you be completely befuddled

Propel yourself into Once Upon A Time mode, to a magical land where a rookie wizard has to sift through a whole heap of tomfoolery and simple sorcery. Will he make a monkey out of you into the bargain?



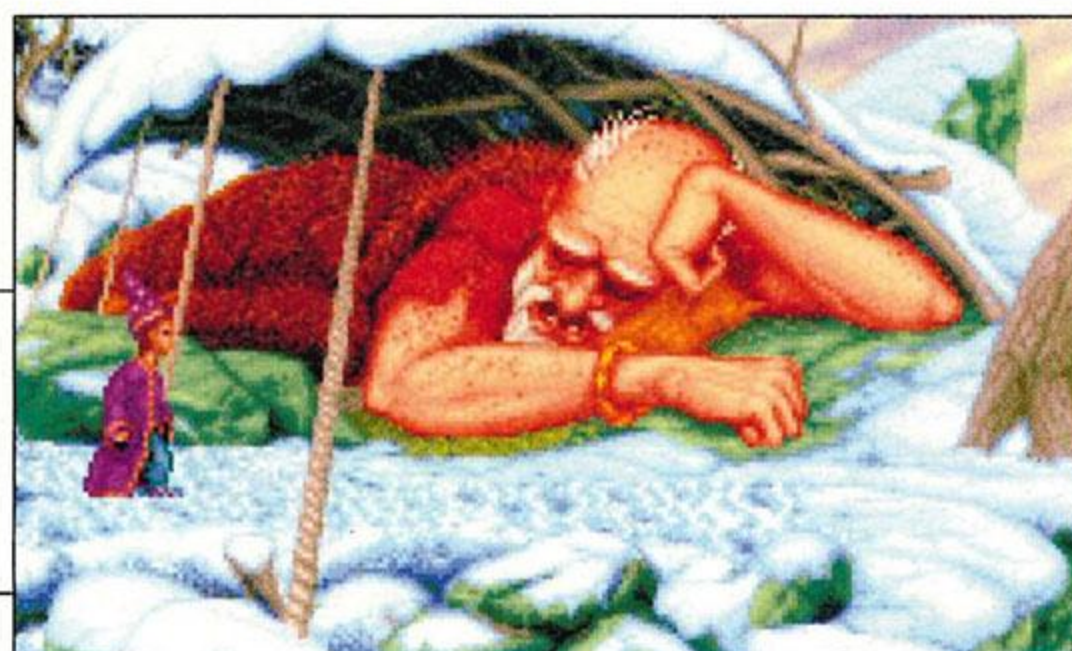
Many a meeting with the 'dodgy geezer' will ensue during the course of your travels

'Is it nice my precious? Is it juicy? Is it scrumptiously crunchable?'

GOLLUM, THE HOBBIT, JRR TOLKIEN

JRR Tolkien really does have a hell of a lot to answer to. Through his timeless trilogy 'The Lord of the Rings' and his unique creation of a fantasy yet wholly credible world, the likes of Gandalf, Bilbo Baggins and Gollum have practically become part of our heritage. Middle Earth and tales of elves, dwarfs and magic rings have sparked undying flames of imagination in the mind's eye of many readers worldwide.

What better way then to produce an instantly appealing graphic adventure than to emboss it with a Tolkien twist? And this is exactly what Adventure Soft, the clever development team behind Elvira - Mistress of the Dark



The giant's fast asleep having sweet dreams. You'll need to give him a rude awakening to make progress

and Waxworks has done. Simon the Sorcerer, not to be, well let's say outwarfed, plonks the basis of its storyline right in the middle of Tolkien territory and then, rather cunningly, adds a contemporary slice of life.

Basically, our fledgling hero Simon has inadvertently got his hands on a wizard's spell book. One minute he's up in the loft at home having a good nosy around and the next? Pouff, he finds himself transported to a fantasy land where he must learn to become a sorcerer and, at the same time, solve a myriad of convoluted puzzles that bring him into contact with druids, trolls, witches, demons etc.

The fantasy adventure presents itself by means of the traditional point and click interface à la LucasArts. Only objects that can be interacted with are

'hotspotted' on the screen when you pass the cursor over them. As you move around the hundreds of different locations - a village, forest, into caves and across boggy swamps - objects can be swiped and a diverse range of characters engaged in conversation.

As both your inventory and knowledge of the gaming arena start to swell, using certain objects in certain places or with other objects, will, hopefully, help in unpicking the knot holding particular puzzles together.

A lovingly guided trip down memory lane really is the order of the day once Simon, still wearing his denim jeans underneath a snazzy wizard's frock, starts striding out into a land riddled with question marks. Elves, bards and gnomes, of the Tolkien variety, appear around every screen and even a creature called Golem, a direct rip off of Gollum from Lord of the Rings, puts in an appearance in relation to a magic ring that makes the wearer invisible.

So too does the game draw a pastiche

Prepare for a fair few good old traipses through the forest. So many paths to follow. No idea which way to go



of virtually every fairy tale that springs to mind. Early on in the proceedings we

Simon gets into schmooze peddling mode and chats up the babes in the bar. The cad

arrive at a witch's hut on the outskirts of the forest, not wildly dissimilar to the witch's house in Hanzel and Gretell. Only here the door's made of chocolate truffle instead of run-of-the-mill sweets.

A Jack and the Beanstalk parallel also comes into play upon meeting up with a waif. He has a cluster of magic beans that will grow into a beanstalk. In another witch's abode nestling deep in the forest, a spinning wheel (The Sleeping Beauty perchance?) takes pride of place, while elsewhere a troll and two billy goats give a revamped version of Billy Goats Gruff.

And you could just go on and on pointing out all the sequences and characters inspired by popular fairy tales. This gives the player a comfortable feel of belonging because everything is so familiar, albeit in a distant way, with all the "these are what I prepared earlier" characters and places. Apart from holding the storyline together though, the main purpose of this approach is to add a chunky layer of humour to the whole ensemble. And talking of humour, yes, Adventure Soft are, in this game, going out of their way to become the



It's the swampling's birthday. Wish him well and pretend the pong of the swamp doesn't matter

British equivalent to LucasArts. Trying to, not simply emulate, but better such belly aching adventures as the two Monkey Islands and Day of the Tentacle is a bit like getting milk out of your nose (as Le Chuck's box cover would have you believe), but, nevertheless, Simon the Sorcerer meets its American rivals more

than half way. You see, over the top of this grotesquely twisted fairy tale land is a no messing veneer of true Brit traditions. Simon meets up with an Arthur Daley type dodgy geezer and talks to well 'ard, big buxom women in the inn. Wagon wheels also get their moment of glory and wizards, born and



There's gotta be a way to stop that racket. But why's the owl talking about melons? The plot thickens



Outside the dwarf's cave, Simon whips out a beard he prepared earlier to form a neat little disguise



The scary swampling's residence lies yonder

déjà-vu

Games that go out of their way to make you laugh are quite a rare thing in the PC gaming world. Day of the Tentacle is the best example so far. This really entertaining story follows the trials of three American high school kids solving puzzles in the same surroundings but in the past, present and future. Their bizarre adventures are matched with some brilliant characterisations and cartoony graphics, giving a surreal feel to the whole caboodle. The two Monkey Island games are also prime examples, the best in their genre in fact, of how much fun you can have with a game. The plots and all their weird and wonderful diversions keep the momentum going from start to finish and you couldn't really ask for a more perplexing and entertaining time.



wholemeal bred, get all yokel on Simon when he asks their advice.

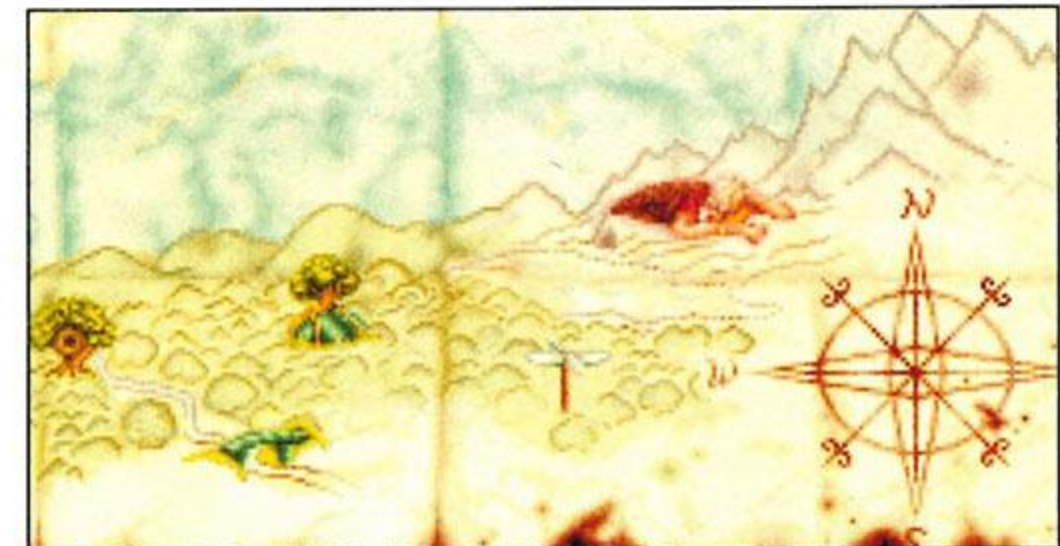
A woodworm tells the young lad to sod off and, in between spewing up after a particularly horrid meal prepared by a swampling, Simon is even referred to as a blummer bum.

Sure, this is all funny, but it seems that more attention has been paid to punch lines and humorous dialogue than has been given to actual characterisations. As it stands, there are far too many indulgent lengthy set pieces of dialogue which you have to pay attention to for fear of missing some vital info, and not enough onus on the player actually taking a proper part in what's being said. Even when you do get the chance to intercept with your chosen line of speech, you're left with the feeling that no matter which response you may choose it's really not going to make the slightest bit of difference to the overall outcome.

Grumbles aside though, the game really is well packaged. Graphics, particularly the outside scenes, are gorgeous and a great deal of attention has been paid to detail. In the forest you may see squirrels gambolling up tree trunks and the woodland itself is personified in so far as you can make out gnarled faces in the barks of trees. Again, echoes of Tolkien perhaps...

And as for the puzzling element of the game? Well, where do you start? No one puzzle exists independently, although they're not too bizarre as to be just plain silly. An awful lot of weaving

Simon begins his quest and a half. Whip the magnet and the scissors. Then be off with you



After each place you've visited the map updates itself. Click on where you want to go and you're transported there

in and out and roundabout is required, backtracking on locations and amassing all the right objects, in order to stand a chance of getting past a particular impasse which, once done, then opens up at a new section of the game.

For example, you need to get past a bard playing a sousaphone. But how can you stop him from making such a terrible racket? First of all you need to negotiate with an oaf over some magic beans, then find somewhere to plant them. When they grow you're rewarded with a a melon which you can then give to the bard in exchange for the sousaphone which is then used to wake up a sleeping giant which then... and so it goes on. And on.

Don't worry too much though because one very clever feature of the

'It won't topple Monkey Island off its perch, but it sure as hell makes it wobble'

SIMON THE SORCERER (continued)

► game is that a Joker of sorts, in the shape of a wise old owl has been implemented.

Using the map which updates itself every time you happen upon a new location, you can easily whizz back to the owl tree for a few pointers.

The owl won't necessarily give you a clue to the immediate problem but you can store up such learned snippets of lore for a later date.

There are many, many delights in store for the intrepid adventurer. The Adventure Soft programming team has spent the last two years perfecting a game writing language called AGOS II which allows for the augmentation of the overall size of a game and even greater concentration on the quality of

In the gnome's cave a bit of bartering is called for to see what lies deeper underground



graphics. There's been even greater freedom to employ sophisticated animation techniques and sound and music to heighten the appeal. This certainly can be seen in the whole of Simon the Sorcerer.

So convoluted do some of the in-game dilemmas become that our main man whips out the Walkman from his wizard's hat and gets down to some serious jiving so as to not to get too bored while waiting for you to make up your mind about what to do next. It's this sort of imagination that really holds the game together so well.

appraisal

I've really enjoyed getting to grips with Simon and his not so simple dilemmas. It's a cunningly thought out game and very playable, packed to the brim with imaginative touches and daft ideas. Right from the comprehensive control interface through to the intensity of graphic detail, it makes for a fun filled rollicking adventure all round. Shorter dialogues and more rounded characters wouldn't have gone amiss but it's great to see the Brits encroaching on what has always been LucasArts territory, and making such a good job of it too.

SHARON GREAVES

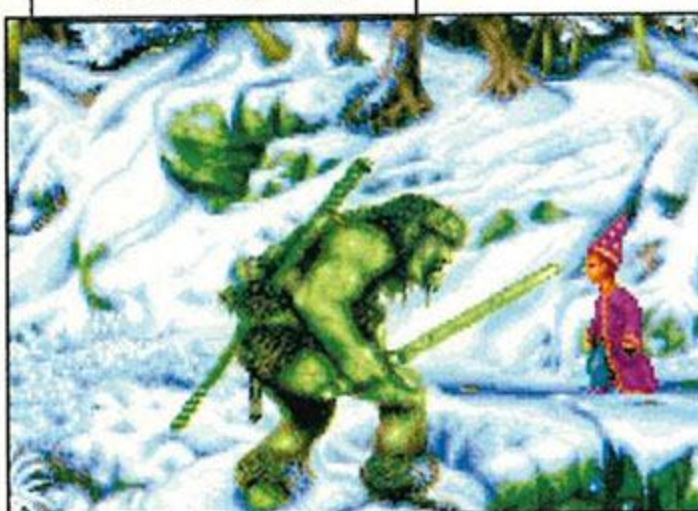
second opinion

When a project like Simon is undertaken, it's inevitable that comparisons have to be made upon its completion. STS looks like a Lucasfilm game, plays like a Lucasfilm game and in turn provides the player with a lot of enjoyment. The controls are easy to pick up and the graphics are of the standard that will turn heads. If this is the start of things to come then the future of British adventure programming looks pretty rosy indeed. Congratulations should be given to all those concerned.

PAUL MCNALLY

PCA SCORE **87%**

Move from the forest's lushness to the snowy 'scapes



The witch has a good cackle at your so called incompetence



data bank

MINIMUM MEMORY	640k
MINIMUM PROCESSOR	286
OPTIMUM SPEED	10MHz
INSTALLATION	Yes
HARD DISK	10MB
GRAPHICS	VGA/MGCA
SOUND CARDS	Adlib, Soundblaster, Roland
CONTROLS	Mouse

GEARWORKS

PUBLISHER	Software Business
CONTACT	0480 496 496
TEAM	Hollyware Entertainment
PRICE	£19.99
RELEASE DATE	Out now

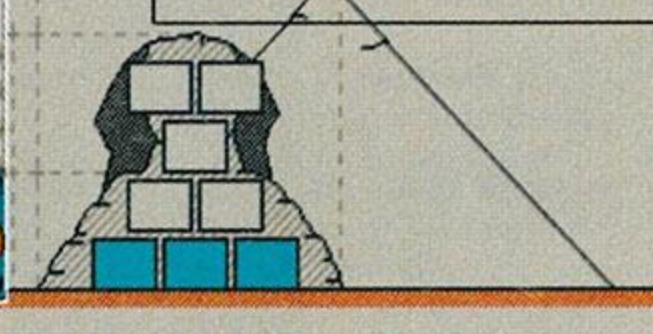


The cursor is used to place cogs and perform various other functions



Link the red cogs by carefully synchronising the others

The stages are based around famous monuments such as the Sphinx shown here



Cog-mania hits the PC in this mind-bending puzzler set in famous buildings from around the world

Gear Works is a puzzle game of fairly basic concept. The general idea is to link target cogs together by stringing other cogs in between and keeping the line in good working order.

It all seems fairly straightforward in theory but the practical side of the game causes quite a few problems. The cogs, of which there are three sizes, are placed upon pegs which stick out from the background so that they can

interlock with each other. If an incorrectly sized cog is placed upon a peg it will stop the entire mechanism and the only way you can get rid of a faulty one is by blowing it up.

Still not a problem, you may be thinking, but the engine that drives the cogs gets hotter and hotter as more are placed in synchronisation. This effectively works as a time limit making the task much harder.

Poffins, small creatures that jump from peg to peg, can upset the flow of events considerably. Kill them by dropping a cog on the peg they are occupying or using the gunsight icon to shoot



The bonus screen contains a fruit machine which allows you to increase your icon level

them off. If a Poffin turns a cog rusty you can set it to rights by dripping oil on it, thus destroying the Poffin responsible.

A bonus level is included to earn extra bombs, oil and bullets. The level ends when the red cogs have been linked. Then your score is totalled and a penalty imposed depending on the number of cogs you failed to link.

appraisal

Gear Works is an interesting game but I can see the gameplay becoming somewhat dull early on. It's fine for the first few turns but then the levels are too similar in style and technique. The graphics are basic and neither is the sound particularly inspiring. A nice idea, but not that nice.

STEVE WHITE

PCA SCORE **58%**

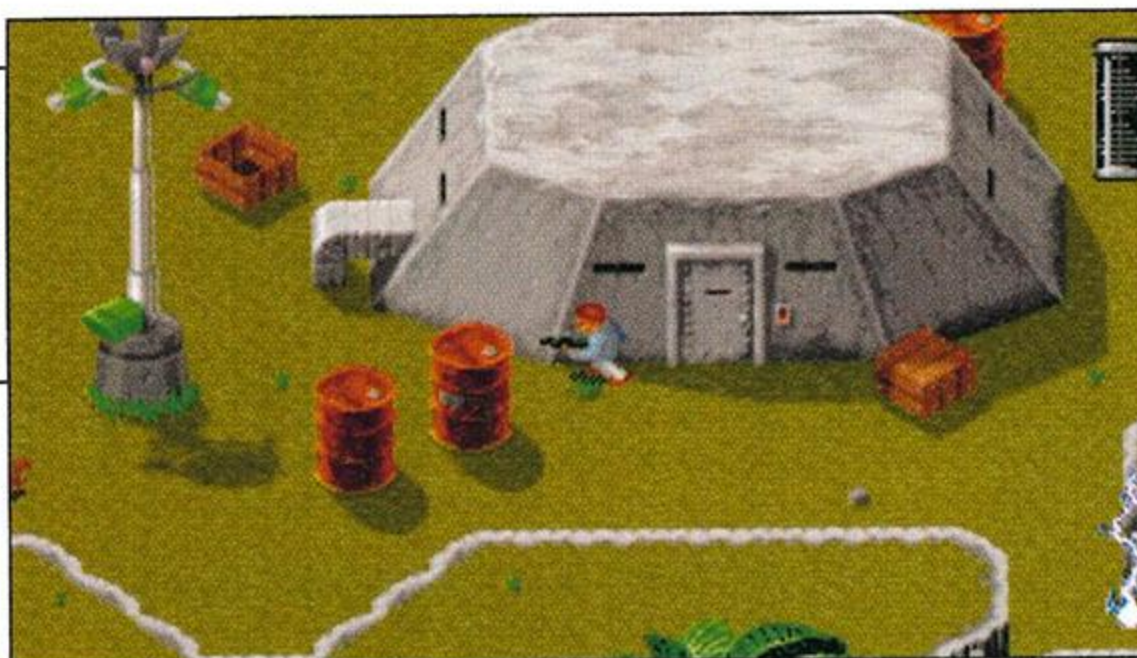
data bank

MINIMUM MEMORY	640k
MINIMUM PROCESSOR	286
OPTIMUM SPEED	12MHz
INSTALLATION	Essential
HARD DISK	1.5MB
GRAPHICS	EGA
SOUND CARDS	Adlib, SoundBlaster
CONTROLS	Keyboard, Mouse

JURASSIC PARK

PUBLISHER	Ocean
CONTACT	061 832 6633
TEAM	In House
PRICE	£34.99
RELEASE DATE	Now

Early stages of Jurassic Park revolve around your character escorting Tim and Lex, Hammond's grandchildren to the Visitors Centre



Dinosaur-mania bites back once again. But will it prove to be the latest craze? Ocean believe the scaly ones are here to stay...



The Gallimimus charge in great herds and avoiding them proves tricky and frustrating

'We seem to have strayed into a land lost in time'

DOUG MCCLURE



Cast your minds back to the mid '70s. If your memory serves you well enough you will undoubtedly remember those classic dinosaur movies starring Doug McClure and his rubber companions who released a craze of epic proportions. This certainly was the first taste of dinosaur-mania for many and those of you may remember being a fervent collector of dinosaur miniatures, t-shirts and all manner of memorabilia.

With the release of Steven Spielberg's Jurassic Park, dinosaur-mania has once again stomped into our lives. Unfortunately, it has brought with it the

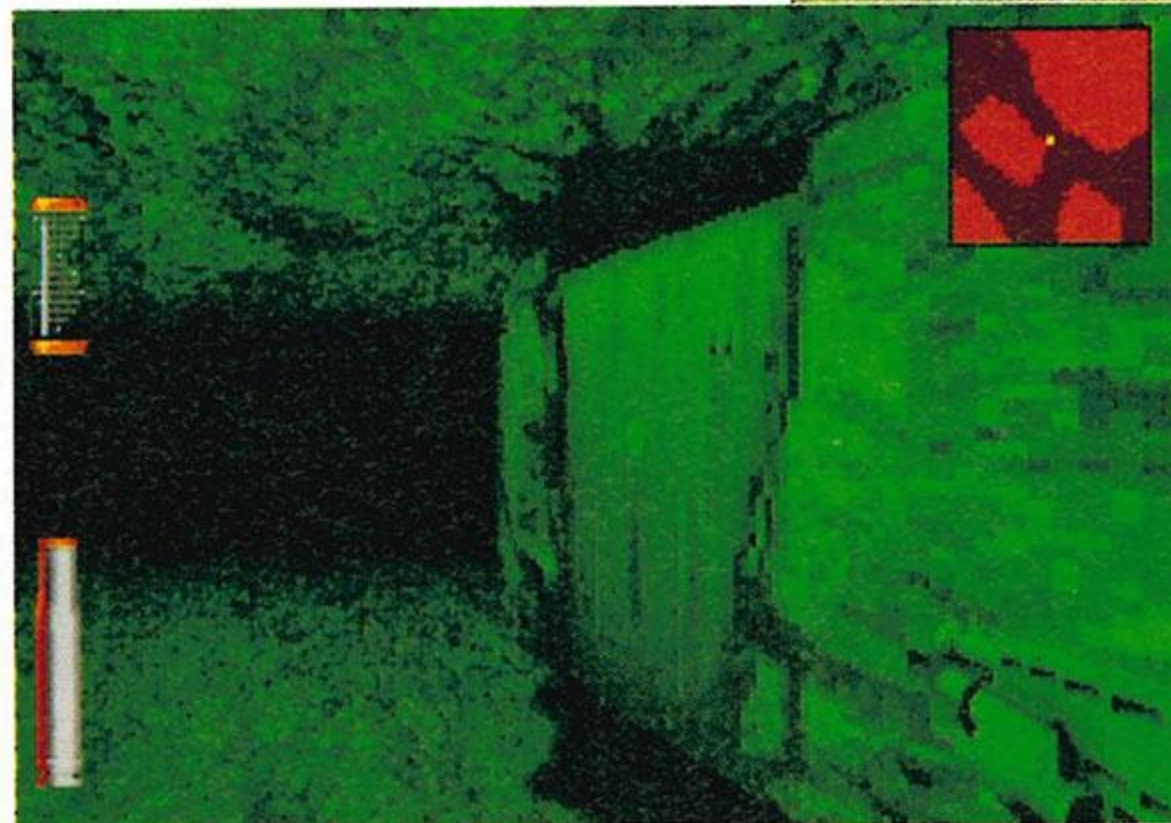
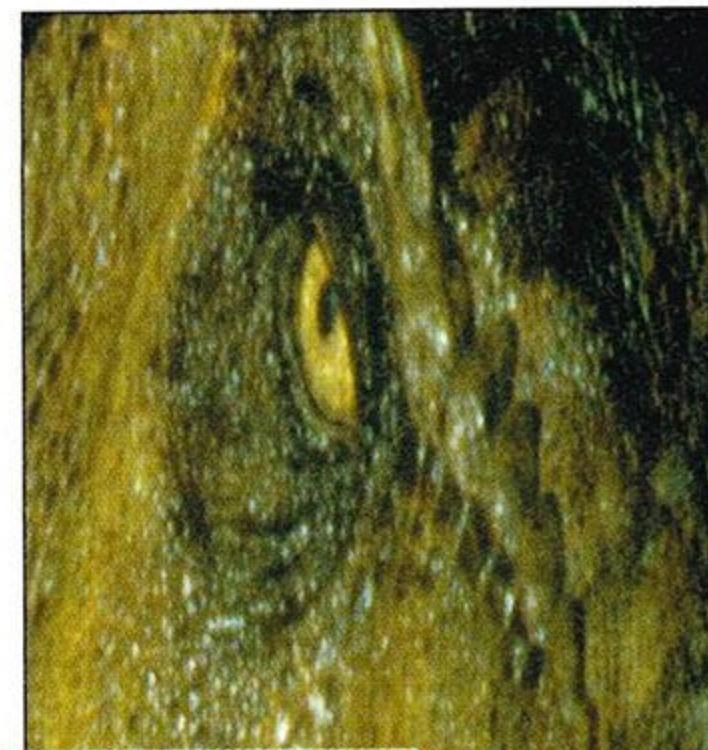
typical over the top commercialism that seems to accompany every aspect of our lives nowadays.

Dinosaur yoghurts, biscuits, drinks, toys and the inevitable – a dinosaur game based upon the Jurassic Park motion picture.

But it didn't start with the movie. Michael Crichton first conceived and wrote the Jurassic Park novel back in 1991 when it became a best-seller. Since the movie, the book has been selling in even greater numbers!

Three years after the initial release of the book Steven Spielberg and his team of special effects wizards, mostly from LucasFilms' ILM (Industrial Light and Magic), re-animated dinosaurs that had been extinct for millions of years. The same technology used to bring these monsters to life may even be used to develop many more games on the PC in the near future.

Since its release Jurassic Park the movie has grossed millions at the box office and has earned itself the reputation as being the most successful motion picture of all time. It seemed inevitable that we would soon witness the computer conversion, and who better to write it than Ocean Software? They have a string of film licences that owed more of their success to their big name backing rather than



the gameplay and graphics.

The actual licence itself cost Ocean Software \$2 million and was signed even before production on the movie began – a high risk technique that software companies seem to be employing more often these days. No one, not even Ocean could have foreseen the eventual success of Jurassic Park.

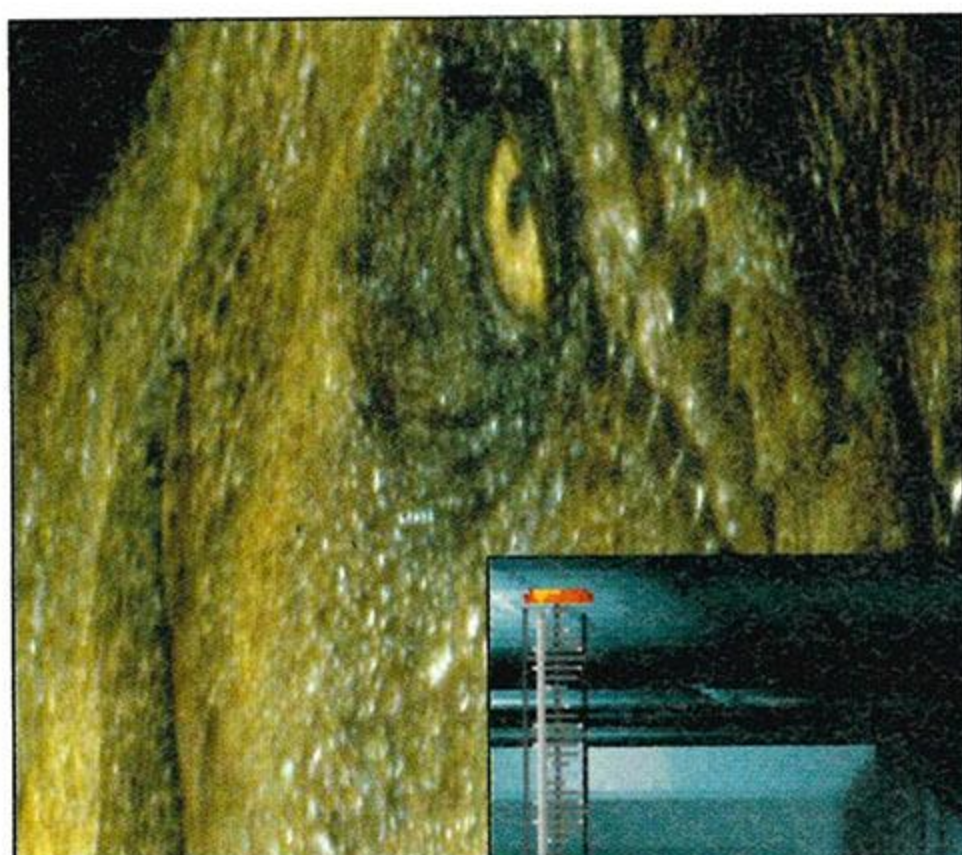
If you haven't seen the movie, the plot revolves around a theme park set on a tiny island off the coast of Central America called Isla Nublar, owned by an ageing scientist called Dr. John Hammond. The theme park has a special attraction – a wide variety of



The fences are down and the dinosaurs are free!

JURASSIC PARK (continued)

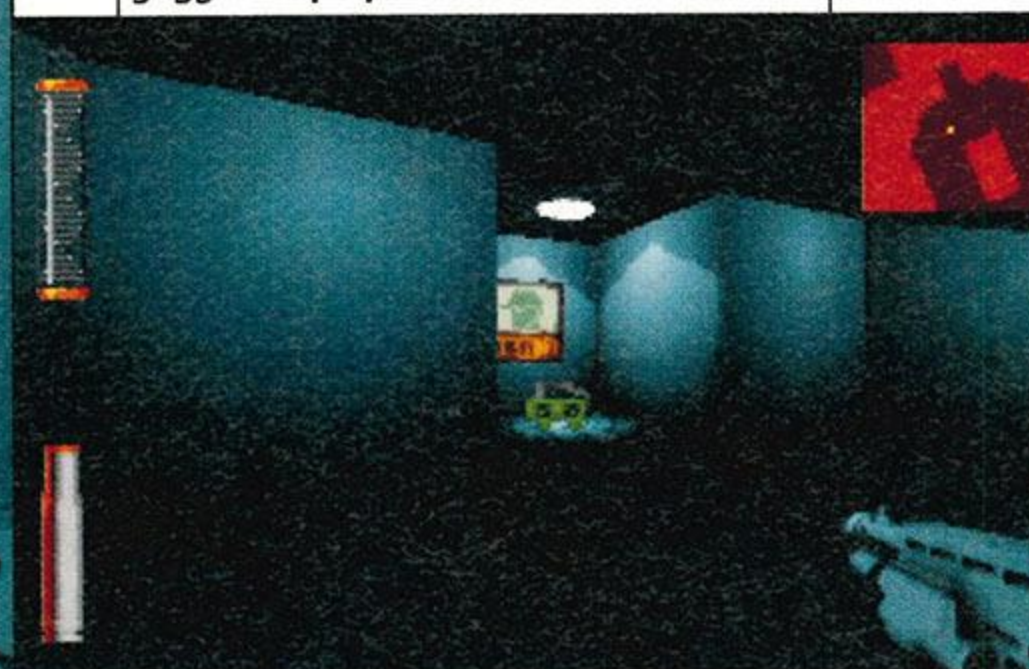
'It is in the fast and smooth 3D sections where Jurassic Park really scores points'



First call is the generator room to turn on the power



It is important that you collect the night goggles in preparation for the caves



► dinosaurs which have been genetically reproduced using the DNA from dinosaur blood found in the veins of prehistoric insects trapped in amber.

Dr. Hammond invites several well known scientists to visit his theme park. Unfortunately, one of Jurassic Park's employees sabotages the security systems which control the electric fences and in turn keep the dinosaurs in their paddocks. The ancient lizards then proceed to escape the enclosures and promptly eat anything and anyone that dares get in their way.

Jurassic Park the game, opens as the dinosaurs are escaping. You play the part of Dr. Alan Grant, a palaeontologist visitor to Jurassic Park and the key to saving the remaining inhabitants which includes Dr. Hammond's grandchildren – Tim and Lex.

The action begins with you stranded outside somewhere in the Tyrannosaurus paddock. Tim and Lex are also in the

paddock and are hiding somewhere. It is your job to find them and keep them close to you until you can get back to the Visitors Center.

Throughout this section of the game dinosaurs roam the area attacking you and the two children. The Velociraptors (terrible claw) attack in packs and inflicts heavy damage, while the Callimimus, although a herbivore, is easily disturbed and will stampede over you if you get in its way.

This section looks very similar to previous Ocean licences – an overhead view with gameplay mainly consisting of blowing away the attacking dinosaurs. Fortunately, the Ocean programmers have added a touch of strategy in the



Keep away from the Triceratops' giant feet

Pteranodons, Compsognathus and Dragonfly constantly harass you as you frantically search for the two children



form of certain differing tasks which must be fulfilled in order to complete the mission. These can include pushing rocks in order to gain access to higher levels or setting up traps to use on the dinosaurs later on.

Your life force is indicated by a health bar which depletes every time you are hit by a dinosaur, although bonus health packets scattered around the play area can be collected. The same is true for ammunition and you can have two different types of weapon – a gun or the tazer – an electrically charged prodding rod which while not being as powerful as the gun will give rogue dinosaurs a shocking experience.

Once the children have been safely escorted into the Visitors Center the game takes on an entirely different look and it is here where Jurassic Park scores points.

The view changes to player perspective and the play area is represented in wonderful 3D – Spear of Destiny style but even faster and

smoother. In this stage of the game you are required to reach the power generator and turn the power back on. This is essential so that the rest of the group can call for a helicopter to rescue them. This is going to take a lot of mapping as it is the largest and most confusing episode of the entire game.

Searching through the dark corridors proves extremely dangerous as Velociraptors guard nearly every corridor – and in packs too! As with the overhead

By collecting the berries you can help save the Triceratops from becoming ill





You should keep your machine gun topped up with ammunition at all times as you will constantly be harassed by Velociraptors



It would have been nice to glimpse the Tyrannosaurus Rex in the 3D sections as Velociraptors do become dull after a while

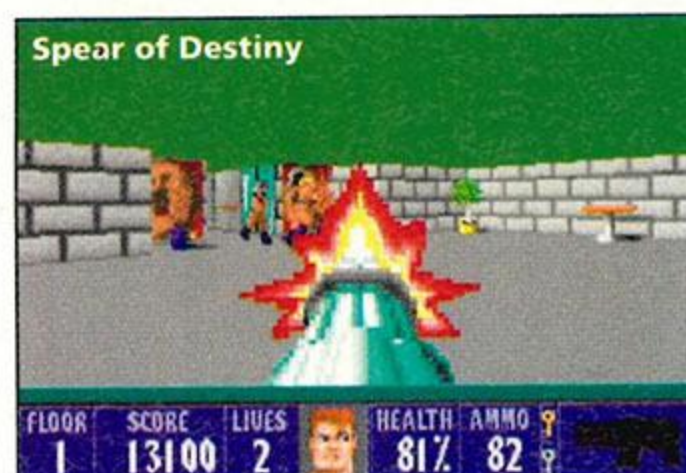
views you are armed with a machine gun that constantly requires fresh ammunition and a body that will need medical attention due to the intense attacks from the Raptors.

Once the power has been turned back on you must venture into the caves and back to the Visitors Center. The caves are extremely dark and night vision goggles are required. These can be collected in the power room. When the

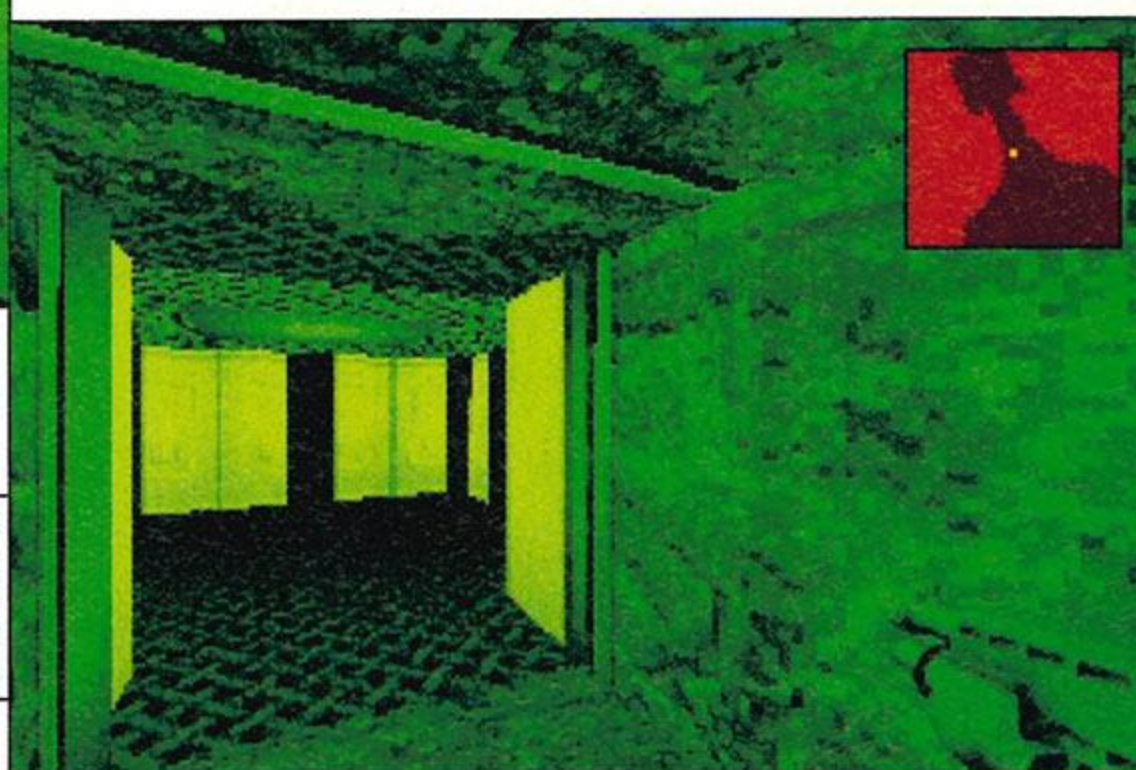
caves have been successfully negotiated you can escape to freedom with the rest of the group in a helicopter that they will have hopefully called for. Unfortunately, we weren't able to get to the end sequence but Ocean promise us that it's pretty spectacular and a must for Jurassic Park fans.

déjà-vu

It's only in the 3D sections of Jurassic Park that comparisons can be drawn with other games. *Spear of Destiny* is a prime example, first appearing as a PD title named *Wolfenstein 3D*. It was the first to use 3D bitmapped texturing in a virtual reality environment. It was such a success that the team behind the product – id Software Inc – began work on a larger version which was released as *Spear of Destiny* under the Psygnosis label. The game's subject matter, infiltrating a castle full of Nazis and destroying them in bloody detail was cautiously received but it boasted the fastest and smoothest graphics of its kind. It sold extremely well and id are now working on an *Aliens* variant. However, *Jurassic Park* has just knocked *Spear of Destiny* into second position.



Ocean have taken the original plot from the movie, emulated it and added extra puzzles and tasks to be completed



Navigation is impossible without wearing the night goggles

appraisal

Jurassic Park contains two different gaming styles and while one is very reminiscent of past Ocean releases the other – a 3D, *Spear of Destiny* affair – indicates a definite and most welcome change for Ocean games. It is in this 3D section containing the interior levels that *Jurassic Park* really shines. The graphics are superb, very fast and silky smooth and the actual play area is huge. It's a shame that the entire game wasn't featured around the 3D as the overhead, platform-style sections are somewhat weak although the appearance of the Tyrannosaurus Rex does instantly create an air of panic and excitement that will bring you out in a sweat. Not only have the programmers spent a great deal of time on the artwork but also the music which has been beautifully composed.

Jurassic Park manages to keep the intense excitement and atmosphere of the movie and certainly makes a welcome break for Ocean. Let's hope that they use the same 3D engine of *Jurassic Park* on future titles.

STEVE WHITE

second opinion

With Crichton's book and Spielberg's movie as precursors it falls that much is to be expected from *Jurassic Park* the game. It's been touted as no ordinary film licence and, indeed, the hype has been relentless, the disadvantage being that maybe we've all been expecting rather too much. The most disappointing area of gameplay is that which takes place outside in the park itself. We're dragged into an overhead 2D arena that lacks any real sense of ominousness and can become fairly monotonous despite dinosaurs springing up

all over the place. It is only in the interior sequences that the game reaches its zenith and does itself proud in terms of nerve wracking gameplay, stunningly detailed graphics and a soundtrack that perfectly encapsulates the heavy sense of foreboding. Switching to a first person viewpoint you're brought right to the very core of the action rather than remaining as an onlooker of sorts. The game then starts to intensify and allows you to soak up the atmosphere, particularly if you decide to have the play area take up the whole of the screen. If the outdoor scenes could have been more proficiently blended with these sections, then the equality between the two different styles of gameplay would be much better balanced and the game as a whole made more worthy of its namesake.

SHARON GREAVES

PCA SCORE **85%**

data bank

MINIMUM MEMORY	590
MINIMUM PROCESSOR	386
OPTIMUM SPEED	25MHz
INSTALLATION	Yes
HARD DISK	9MB
GRAPHICS	VGA
SOUND CARDS	Adlib, Roland, SoundBlaster
CONTROLS	Mouse, Joystick, Keyboard

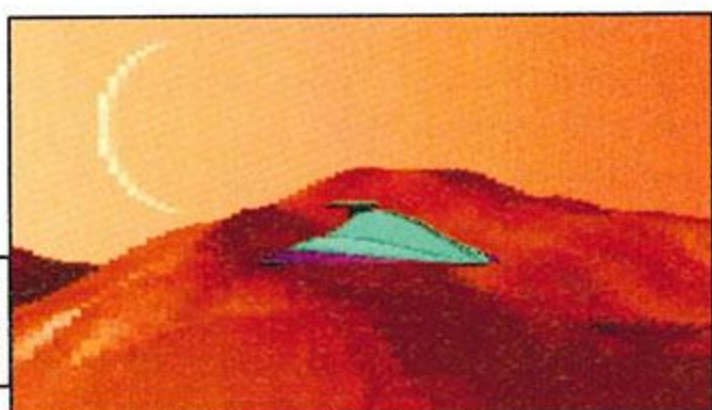
CYBERRACE

PUBLISHER Cyberdreams
CONTACT 071-328 3267
TEAM H'man/Enroth
PRICE £34.99
RELEASE DATE Nov

'I don't even like old cars. I'd rather have a goddam horse. A horse is at least human for God's sake'

JD SALINGER BORN 1919

One of the many external views you can select in CyberRace. These cameras can be switched on or off



CyberRace has everything I like. The technology in the world of the game fascinates me, and the real world technology needed to bring that fictional world to life is nothing short of astounding.

This is Syd Mead talking, one of today's

most sought-after futuristic designers and enlisted in the actual game production of CyberRace.

Mead is widely regarded as a genius and has to his credit Blade Runner, Tron, 2010 and Star Trek: The Motion Picture. Until now he's declined to get involved with computer games. But the face of entertainment is changing, and it doesn't do to miss the boat...

In the game you play the character of Clay Shaw, one of the best CyberRacers in the business but unwilling to race anymore. Unfortunately the Terran Empire have decided they want him to compete under their flag in the forthcoming races to decide the fate of the galaxy. To ensure Shaw does his best his girlfriend (Alyssia) has been kidnapped and is being held hostage.

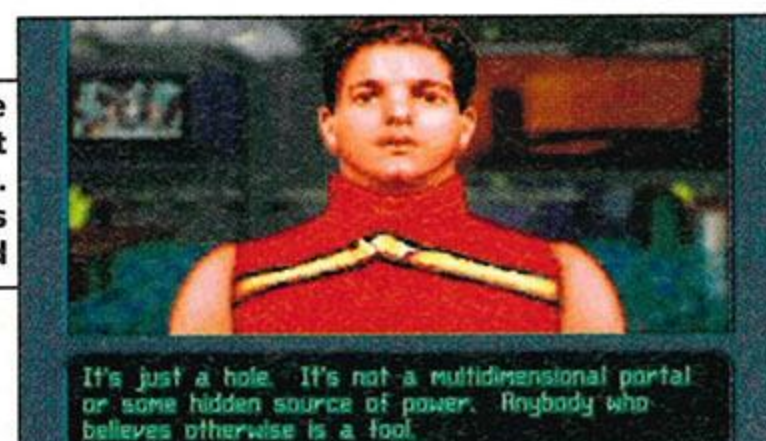
Before each race an overall objective is provided. It may be that a certain other team has a bounty on Shaw and will try to take him out at every available opportunity. Alternatively there may be a cash bonus for wiping out a rival team's leader. Prior to the race

When galactic war rages, the only way to prevent the destruction of the solar system is to organise a series of car races where the winning racer has full control.



This is Clay Shaw. One of the fastest and best racers in the business. He's so hot his talents are in big demand

The news reader regularly pops up to give information on the contestants



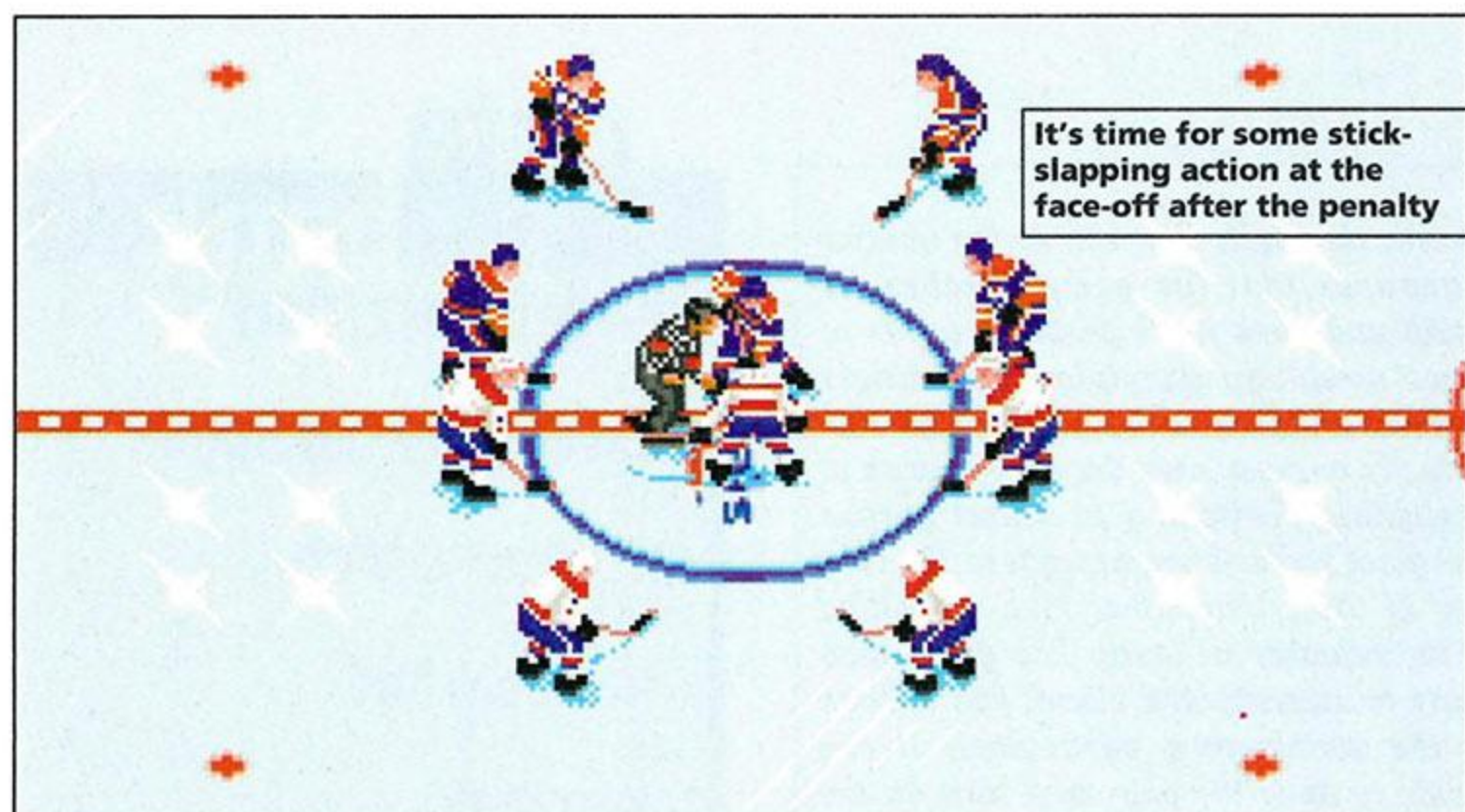
'The initial impression is on

NHL HOCKEY

PUBLISHER Electronic Arts
CONTACT 0753 549442
TEAM Electronic Arts Canada
PRICE £44.99
RELEASE DATE Out now

'Serious sport has nothing to do with fair play. It is bound up with hatred, jealousy, boastfulness, disregard of all rules and sadistic pleasure in witnessing violence: in other words, it is war minus the shooting'

GEORGE ORWELL 1903-1950



Ice hockey is a new concept to British audiences. Whereas standard hockey is considered confined to public Schools, this is fast, exciting and, at times, brutal

Electronic Arts have had versions of their National Hockey League game buzzing around on the console formats for over two years now. But technology has moved on, allowing them to produce the definitive version for high-spec PCs.

As with many of their other releases this month, the minimum requirement for this title is at least a 386, but it's all the better if the machine is a 486. To obtain the necessary speed for a decent hockey game, a certain niche has had to be cut out of the marketing (à la 286 owners). Is it really worth upgrading at the moment?

While the console versions were undoubtedly very good, there was always one thing missing – a long-term overall goal. No real league option existed, but thankfully all this has now been put right. You



take charge of one of the NHL teams – all with correct player names and stats – and lead them to glory to become the greatest team in the world.

EA have never had a problem with their presentation in the past, and there

Pressing the ESC key allows you to access the options screen where you can edit your team



continuing it is necessary to tool up the CyberSled with as much weaponry as possible. Good weapons are the key to success as you can blast off other drivers to stop them getting too far ahead.

The initial impression of the racing section in CyberRace is one of total confusion. You start off all over the track with the other racers in position behind. This is obviously a disadvantage as the sled you are controlling becomes an instant target.

The first few seconds of the race are usually extremely hectic, more so since there are a lot of early barrages exchanged between drivers. Most of the spin-offs will occur at this early stage.

The track is quite unusual in that there are no real restrictions as to where the sled may go. A small pathway is created with blue, holographic pylons. Keeping the vehicle in between these lines earns credits at the end of the race but there is no real disadvantage to wandering off all over the place.

Each race is 10 laps long and there are times when those 10 laps seem like 10 years. Any of the vehicles ahead (or

behind) can be attacked with the full range of weapons available. Mines can be dropped to persuade following traffic to drop back a little, while a well-placed missile can do a lot of harm to the guys in front.

At the end of the race how well you've performed directly affects how the storyline progresses from thereon. Doing well could make life more difficult as other drivers can decide to hold a vendetta.

Eventually, if you are successful in enough races, Alyssia is released and Clay Shaw's life returns back to normal.

Although initially difficult to get started on, the game is very playable. While being entertaining in places and looking like a very nice racing game, CyberRace still has something missing and this prevents it from becoming a classic original.

The blue pylons stretch before you. Follow these for credits at the end

Speeding around is all very well until you lose track of where to go



data bank

MINIMUM MEMORY

590k+4Meg

MINIMUM PROCESSOR

386

OPTIMUM SPEED

20MHz

INSTALLATION

Yes

HARD DISK

12MB

GRAPHICS

VGA

SOUND CARDS

Adlib, Roland, SoundBlaster

CONTROLS

Mouse, Joystick, Keyboard

appraisal

i quite enjoyed playing CyberRace, although it did come across as being very confusing in places. Finding the track can sometimes be off-putting and so too is getting shot in the rear. On the plus side though, the graphics are very appealing and digitised to good effect.

PAUL McNALLY

PCA SCORE **80%**

ne of total confusion'

'The EA Sports Network comes to life on a format besides the consoles'

The forward line-up gives an indication of who will face off against each other in attacking lines

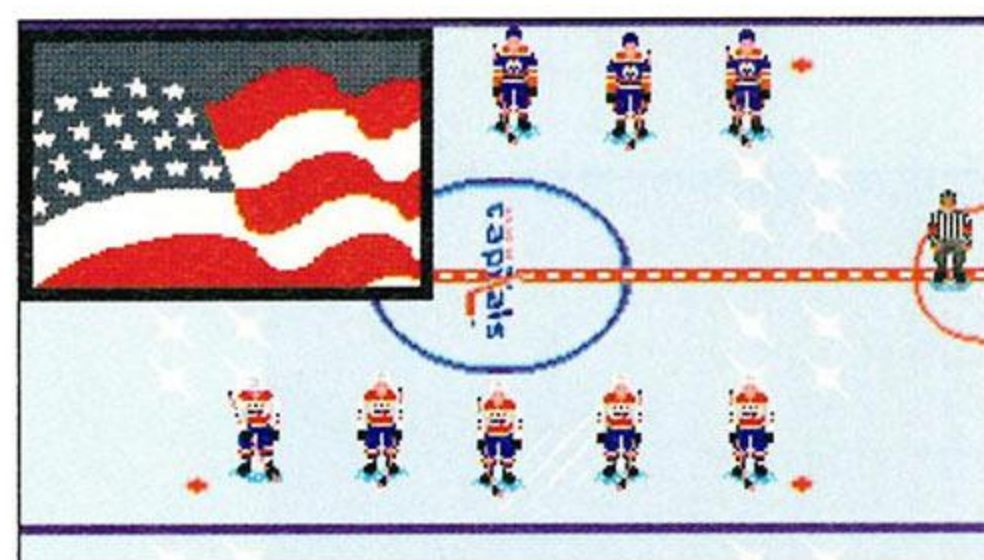
are certainly no signs of any on the horizon. NHL Hockey is one of the best presented games I have ever seen.

With a SoundBlaster present a full introductory commentary is relayed, and any penalties during the game are announced by the referee over the tannoy to the crowd.

As with any game from the USA a lot of tactical changes and decisions have to be made. It is useful to get to know what you are doing straight away or else your team will soon be getting consistently tonked by the opponents.

The key factors in ice hockey are the line changes. This is where the five players on the rink are regularly changed so as not to tire them out. The trick is to bring the right offensive and defensive lines on at the correct times.

A penalty sin-bin is also in operation. Any foul play is punished by a stint on the side-lines, thus reducing your side to



The Goal-minder is down and there is a huge problem for Los Angeles

The National Anthem plays in the background as the team faces off for the first time

line things are still playable, but you'll miss the extra speed that you get from the higher specifications.

four men. This situation is called a Power-Play and usually results in an opposition score.

The graphics are good and everything works nicely on a 486. A grade down the

The best thing is that it is actually a very good sports simulation. With the excellent playability coupled with quality presentation this game deserves to be right up there in the Christmas charts.

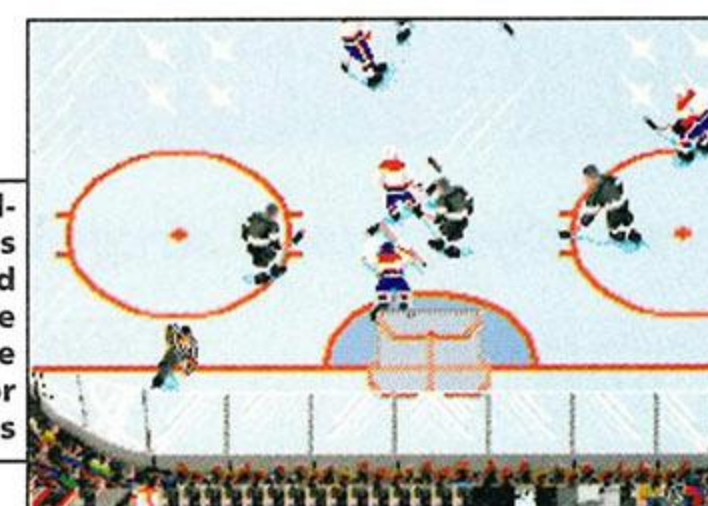
appraisal

NHL Hockey is a great achievement for the programmers and the PC. Not so long ago a project such as this would have been deemed impossible by the cynics. Now it is not only here but extremely good too. The control could be classed as being a little tricky at first, but

this is only because of the inertia on the players due to the ice. In fact the men move around just like they would in real life. The League presents a long term challenge and gives gamers seeking something a little more arcade just what they are looking for.

PAUL McNALLY

PCA SCORE **83%**



data bank

MINIMUM MEMORY

538MB+2MB

MINIMUM PROCESSOR

386

OPTIMUM SPEED

33MHz

INSTALLATION

Yes

HARD DISK

7MB

GRAPHICS

VGA

SOUND CARDS

Adlib, Roland, SoundBlaster

CONTROLS

Joystick, Mouse

DARK SUN — SHATTERED

PUBLISHER US Gold
CONTACT 021 625 3366
TEAM SSI
PRICE £TBA
RELEASE DATE Out now

'The nation that destroys its soil destroys itself'

FRANKLIN D ROOSEVELT



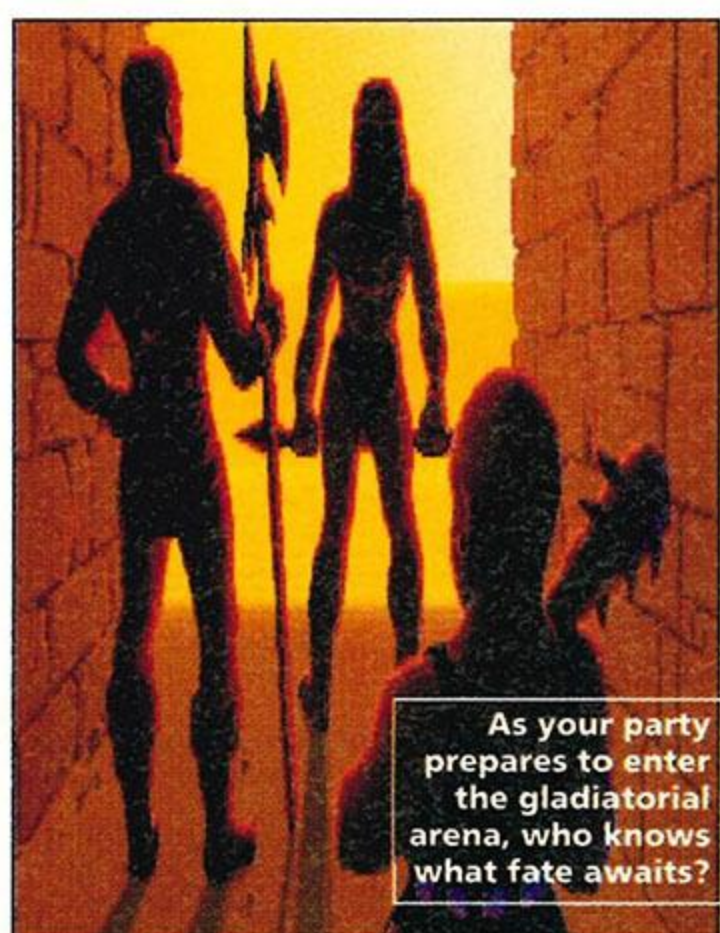
The arena is your immediate introduction to combat and the local wildlife

The spell screen: You're only a point and a click away from some devastating effects



Most areas have a resting place where your party can recover from a leathering

The Dark Sun world of Athas is arid and bleak, a wasteland with a handful of cities ruled by 1000 year old sorcerer kings. They call themselves gods and rule through a religious organisation known as the templars...



As your party prepares to enter the gladiatorial arena, who knows what fate awaits?

SI have already built themselves a strong reputation for producing quality role playing and fantasy adventure games. You need to look no further than their successful Eye of the Beholder series and The Summoning to find superb quality and true depth of gameplay.

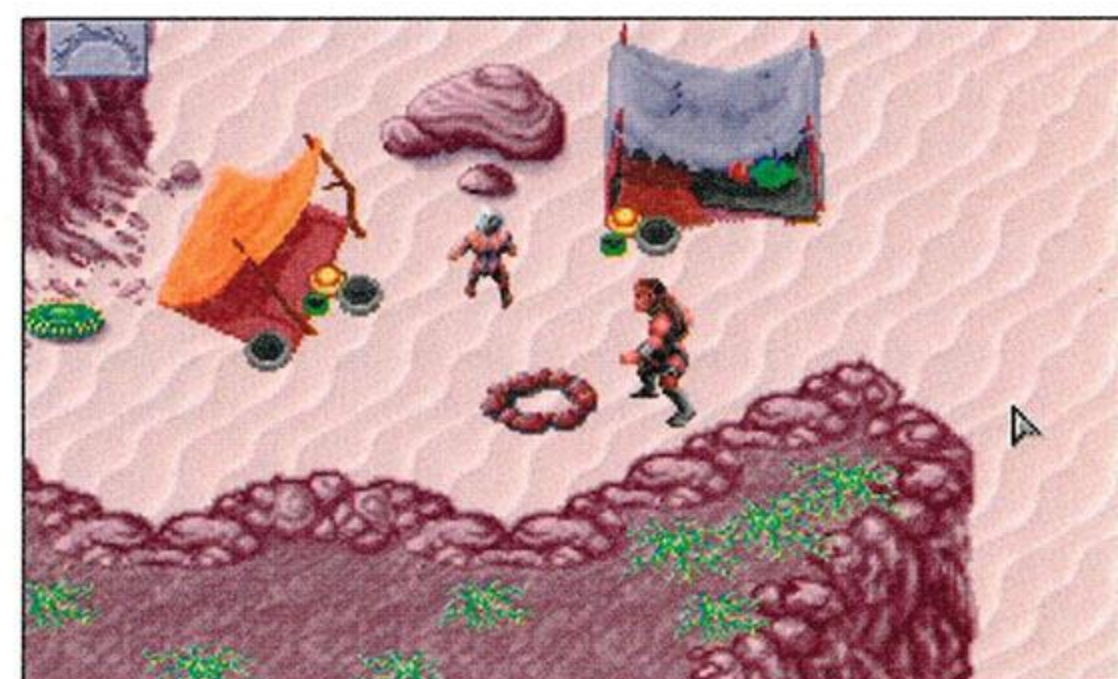
Using 3-D first person or isometric perspectives, real-time face-to-face combat and devious puzzles they have offered challenges to tax even the most hardened gamer.

Their latest release, Dark Sun, features a completely new game engine which is designed to take full advantage of the

PC's 16-bit power and a combat system based on AD&D rules.

The King's rule in this land is harsh and a large proportion of the populace is enslaved. Only the strongest can feel any measure of safety because the templars can condemn without trial.

Though free, life in the wastelands is precarious – water supplies may fail at any time, marauding monsters can devastate a village and slavers are seen to be a constant threat. Until these tiny villages are able to look beyond day-to-day survival and form an alliance, they are unlikely to survive for more than a



couple of years.

Using a smoothly scrolling plan view and a point-and-click interface it is up to you to pitch your party of four into a colourful world of strange creatures in which you must survive or perish.

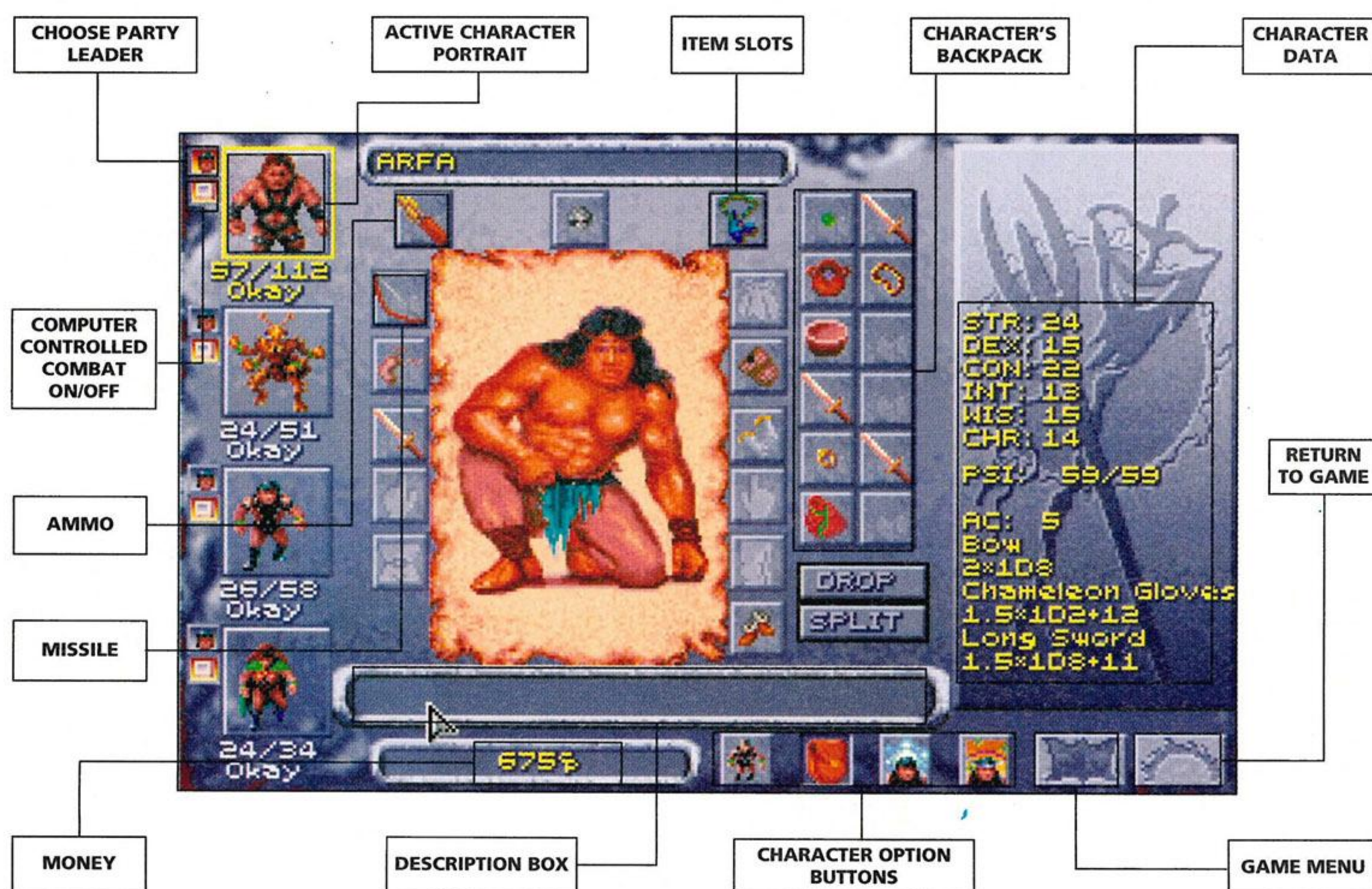
For those who want to dive straight in, a ready-made party is provided but generating your own tailor-made group is an uncomplicated business. You can choose from a range of 14 predefined characters made up from the likes of humans, dwarfs, half elves and so on which in turn can be fighters, rangers, clerics and druids.

New classes are preservers who take over the place of magicians – but just as effective, and psionics whose powers lie in the manipulation of objects and mental warfare.

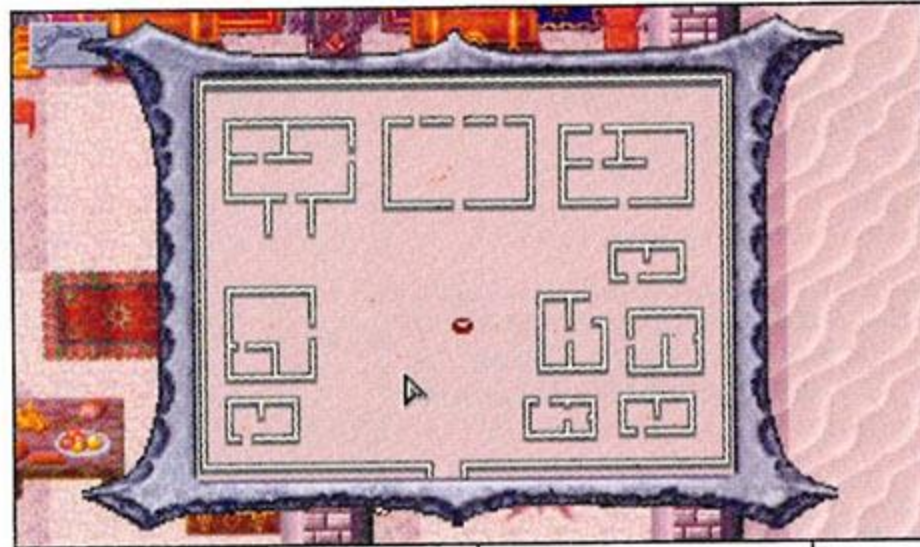
Your party starts off as slaves in the city of Draj, and their sole purpose in life is to entertain the locals by fighting as gladiators in the arena. It is here that you are immediately introduced to the AD&D combat system and a range of weird and wonderful opponents to whet your appetite for later on.

Those who are used to the cut and thrust of real-time battles may find the AD&D combat rather tedious. Fighting takes place as a series of moves by each individual and the action pauses to allow you to decide which action, if any should be taken. This is quite time consuming

A role playing power struggle where only the strongest will survive



LANDS



The overhead map view reveals the whole area on screen. To obtain a close up of a specific area then just click on it



Character generation is a simple process. Just roll the die to gamble with your stats

déjà-vu

Although there's been nothing like *Shattered Lands* before, the nearest thing to it in the gameplay department is *The Summoning*. In another US Gold mega role playing challenge you adopt a single character in a 3-D isometric playfield. Both big and beautiful it will keep you occupied for a number of hours. There are many weird and wonderful monsters and plenty of NPC to talk to for clues.



Puzzles and sub-plots abound as you search numerous devious levels of the Shadow Weaver's stronghold to find and ultimately destroy him. It embroils you in a fantasy game of such mammoth proportions and multiple twists and endings, that by the time you've finished, you'll have forgotten what you ever did with your spare time.



'the graphics are stunning with great attention paid to detail and the music and sound effects add tremendous atmosphere'

Conversation with NPCs offers multiple choice responses to search for clues

but there is an option to set the computer to control your party's actions, while you sit back and watch. You can interrupt at any time to take over should things not go quite according to plan.

Your main objective is to escape from your captors and seek out others who will join you in a rebel force to defeat the evil sorcerer-king's army.

Rather than being one huge area, the game world is split into sections and each is loaded in from disk as you leave one and enter another. This game was played on a low spec 386 and things seemed to be a little bit slow in the loading department, although several options are provided to help speed up the gameplay, such as turning off the animations.

The interface is a very slick point-and-click affair which is simple to use and very effective, while short cut keys have been provided for most of the regular actions. A single click on the right mouse button will change the mouse pointer to one of three modes - Walk, Attack or Look. A press on the left button then carries out the action once the cursor is on the target.

In Attack mode, for example, the action can be to strike with a weapon, launch a missile or cast a spell. A rather nice touch here is that if you have readied both a sword and a bow, the computer automatically detects, from your proximity to the target, which of them you wish to use.

Another terrific idea is the ability to

scroll the screen around without actually moving. You can also call up a miniature map that covers the whole game area and shows the locations of all characters as flashing dots.

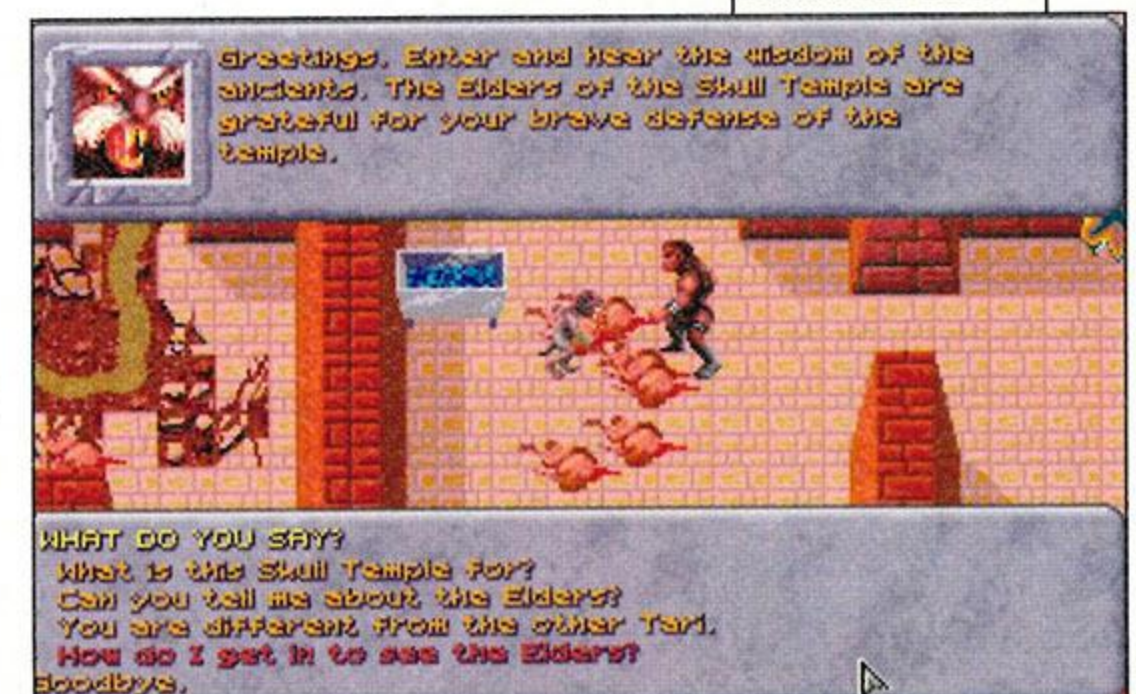
Using this by simply pointing at a location will bring it into full screen view. Click the Walk mouse pointer on this screen and your party will automatically move there - access permitting - taking the shortest route. This is great and removes any worries about remembering how to get to certain places. You know where you want to go to, so let the computer get on with doing it.

The game plot moves along in a fairly linear manner - you have to do one thing in order for something else to

happen. But lots of little sub-plots will take you backwards and forwards between the various game areas.

Plenty of NPCs are hanging around to talk to, and these will give a number of clues as to your next move.

The graphics are stunning with great attention paid to detail, and the music and sound effects add tremendous atmosphere throughout. If you like a good role playing challenge, look no further as this will give you hours and hours of gameplay for your money.



appraisal

With just a little time available I've only had the opportunity to scratch the surface of this roleplaying challenge of awesome proportions. But what I've seen of it so far is really impressive. I struggled at first with the combat system, but once I became accustomed to it I really felt as though I was in control. Graphically it is superb and the attention to detail has to be seen to be believed. The only drag for me was the amount of time it took to load each game area, but that's a small price to pay. Even so, a fast PC is the order of the day.

ALAN McLACHLAN

second opinion

I am really impressed with *Dark Sun*. It's the best example of anSSI Dungeons & Dragons game to date. Problems with the others in the series have ranged from them being too complex to too slow but *Dark Sun* seems to have addressed and corrected those shortcomings. The game is more combat orientated than the early *Ultima* titles and it also features characters not seen in any previous AD&D games. Recommended for anyone who has a high-spec PC with around 50 hours to fill.

PAUL McNALLY

PCA SCORE 85%

data bank

MINIMUM MEMORY
600k

MINIMUM PROCESSOR
3865x

OPTIMUM SPEED
16MHz

INSTALLATION
Essential

HARD DISK
17MB

GRAPHICS
VGA

SOUND CARDS
Adlib, Roland, SoundBlaster

CONTROLS
Keyboard, Mouse

SIM FARM

PUBLISHER Mindscape
CONTACT 071 490 2333
TEAM Maxis
PRICE £39.99
RELEASE DATE Out now



Scanning the local area for a good plot of land is important at the start of the night

Your humble beginnings are at a small farmhouse. Things can only get better from here



After Sim City, Sim Earth, Sim Fish nobody could guess where Maxis would next take their series. Don the wellies and get ready for a little muck spreading in the latest addition – Sim Farm

A good farmer is nothing more nor less than a handy man with a sense of humor.

EB WHITE – AUTHOR

Farming is one of those occupations that a lot of people say they wouldn't mind having a go at. It's all pie in the sky for the majority but with Maxis' Sim Farm the curious can now have a go with this crop simulator.

It doesn't sound particularly exciting and the back of the box going on about Soil Depletion and Crop Rotation hardly makes it all sound like a bit of fun. Don't judge a book by the cover certainly rings true here. Similar things could have been said about Sim City yet it turned into one of the most popular games ever.

Sim Farm is billed as the country cousin of SC. Indeed the general principle is very similar. Some of the other Maxis' titles of late have had huge manuals to wade through before any serious attempt could be made at playing the game. Sim Farm really has

gone back to basics by providing a nice and simple mouse interface, and easy to pick up objectives.

The first noticeable thing is how nice the screen looks. A very high resolution has been chosen and a compact, good-looking window system operates throughout.

Starting off with a small plot of land, the idea is to build up and up until you have a huge farm capable of supporting the local towns. As in real life these towns can sometimes bite the hand that feeds them. Townfolk aren't always too receptive to the idea of you spreading out the land and letting it "go to waste" when it could be put to better use covered in buildings and the like. So there is a constant war raging between you and the local mayor.

Any area under your control can have a whole host of options performed upon it. Twenty four different crops can be grown and each has its own planting, harvesting and storage needs. All these are portrayed in pictorial form and it really does look very nice indeed.

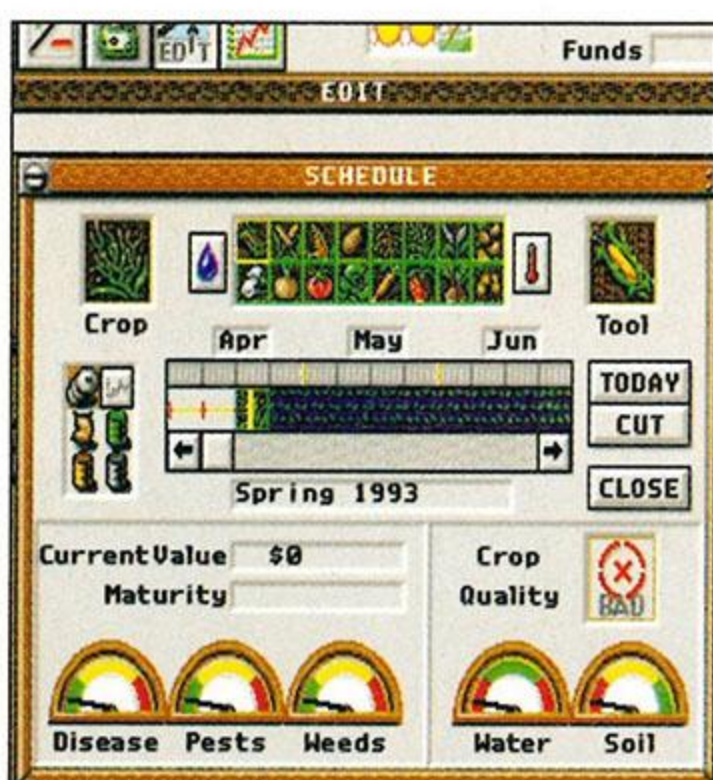
As well as crops, arable farming is also possible. There is nothing stopping the purchase of livestock. Cows, sheep and

pigs are all an important part of Sim Farm. The best thing being that you can choose to run a farm exactly as you like.

As with Sim City cash is perhaps the most important factor. Purchases are limited to the money available, although a loan from the bank can occasionally come in quite handy.

The other key factor to worry about is the weather. Preparation must be made against frost and other inclement conditions. Again, as with Sim City, disasters can be introduced to spice things up a little.

Sim Farm is perhaps the most natural progression in the Sim series. However it seems that where they plan to go next is anybody's guess.



The crop schedule shows exactly what has to be done, when and where

Your plot is coming on quite well. Things are growing and development is occurring



Two fields full of rice are having a problem surviving due to the lack of pesticide



Building roads helps to speed up the transport of crops to the nearby towns



appraisal

We've seen it all before but why not? The concept is solid, the products sell, the subject matter is unusual enough to make this a success too. It's simple to play and looks very nice but there was just something missing for me. It'd be difficult to achieve what Sim City did because that particular title was so original. Now it's just the same old ideas in different situations. Sim Farm is a competent little game with lots to it, but unfortunately it didn't appeal to me too much because of the subject matter. Sure it's fun for a while but the long-term hook just wasn't there. Shame really.

PAUL McNALLY PCA SCORE **77%**

data bank

MINIMUM MEMORY
640k
MINIMUM PROCESSOR
286
OPTIMUM SPEED
12MHz
INSTALLATION
Yes
HARD DISK
4.6MB
GRAPHICS
VGA
SOUND CARDS
Adlib, Roland, SoundBlaster
CONTROLS
Mouse

LOST IN TIME

PUBLISHER Coktel / D.I.
CONTACT 0276 684959
TEAM In House
PRICE £34.99
RELEASE DATE Out now

The graphics in Lost in Time are all digitised photographs of real French locations

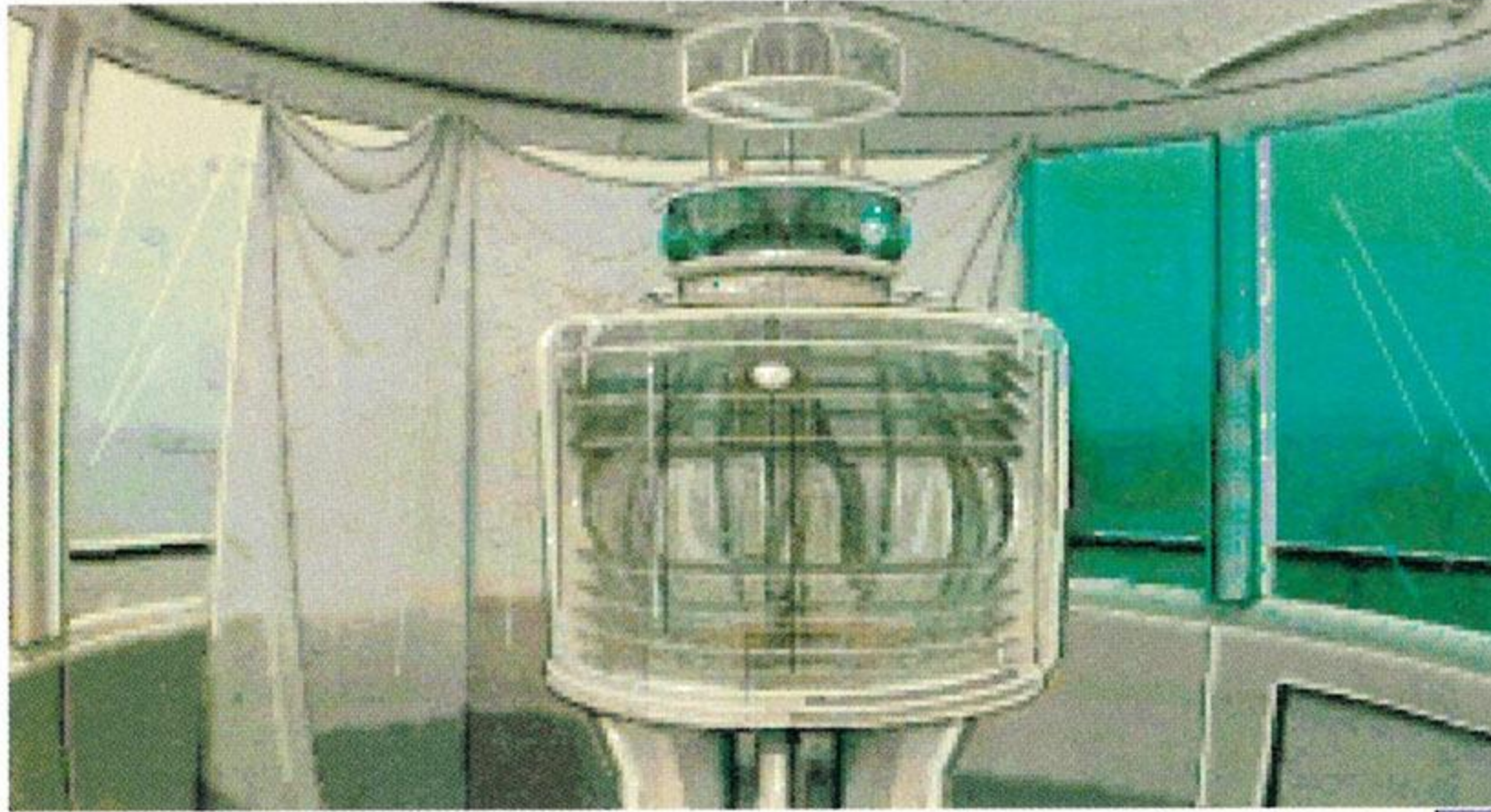


Coktel Vision have certainly changed the face of the adventure game market. This time they've made the main character an independent, intelligent, non-violent female called Doralice

'Where we're going we don't need roads'

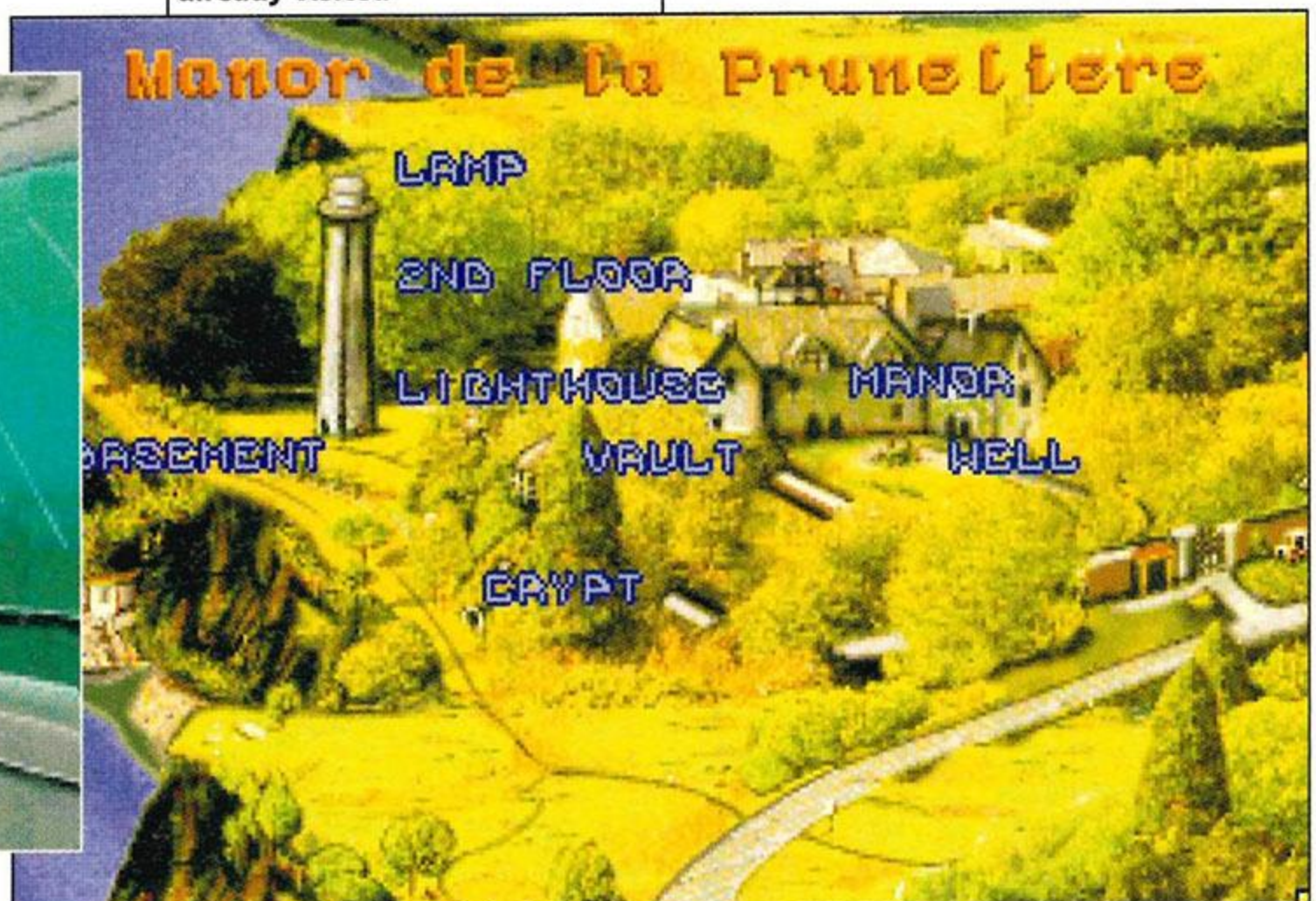
DOC, BACK TO THE FUTURE

Many of the rooms have plenty of things to do. Miss one item and you could be trekking around hopelessly



The map screen allows you easy access to any location you have already visited

Doralice attempts to hold a conversation with a slave on the other side of a wall



fascination, Coktel Vision's previous adventure game offering, never really came out all that successfully. So when it came to reviewing Lost in Time we picked it up rather sceptically.

Eleven HD disks seem a lot but when the graphics come on screen you'll begin to understand why so much space is needed. Installation is simple and well-

Whenever a screen has something to use a box will pop up in the centre which you can then examine

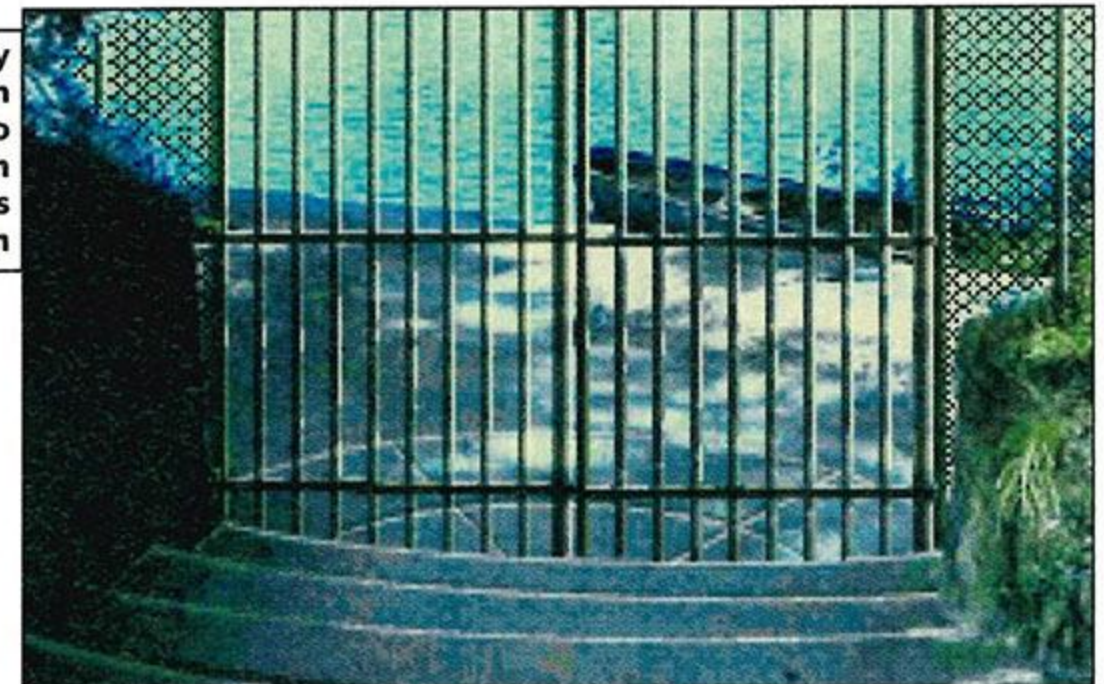


I get in the elevator.

presented and comes in two choices, in case hard-drive space is restricted. The game can either be completely installed at the first attempt - you'll need 16.8 megs of hard drive for that - or in two stages, whereby when part two has been installed, part one is erased.

Once past the protection you get a first taste of the graphics. Virtually everything is digitised. Doralice, our leading lady, finds herself in the hold of a ship unaware how she got there, but she knows one thing and that is she has to escape. Here begins Lost in Time.

This sturdy looking iron gate is going to cause an obvious problem



When Doralice comes across anything interesting, a box appears in the centre of the screen revealing a close-up of the object she is examining. Clicking on it again may bring it even closer, to help you decide if it is worth picking up and keeping.

One of the good things about Lost in Time is that no time is lost searching everything for objects. Simply clicking once usually reveals whether an item is worth further investigation.

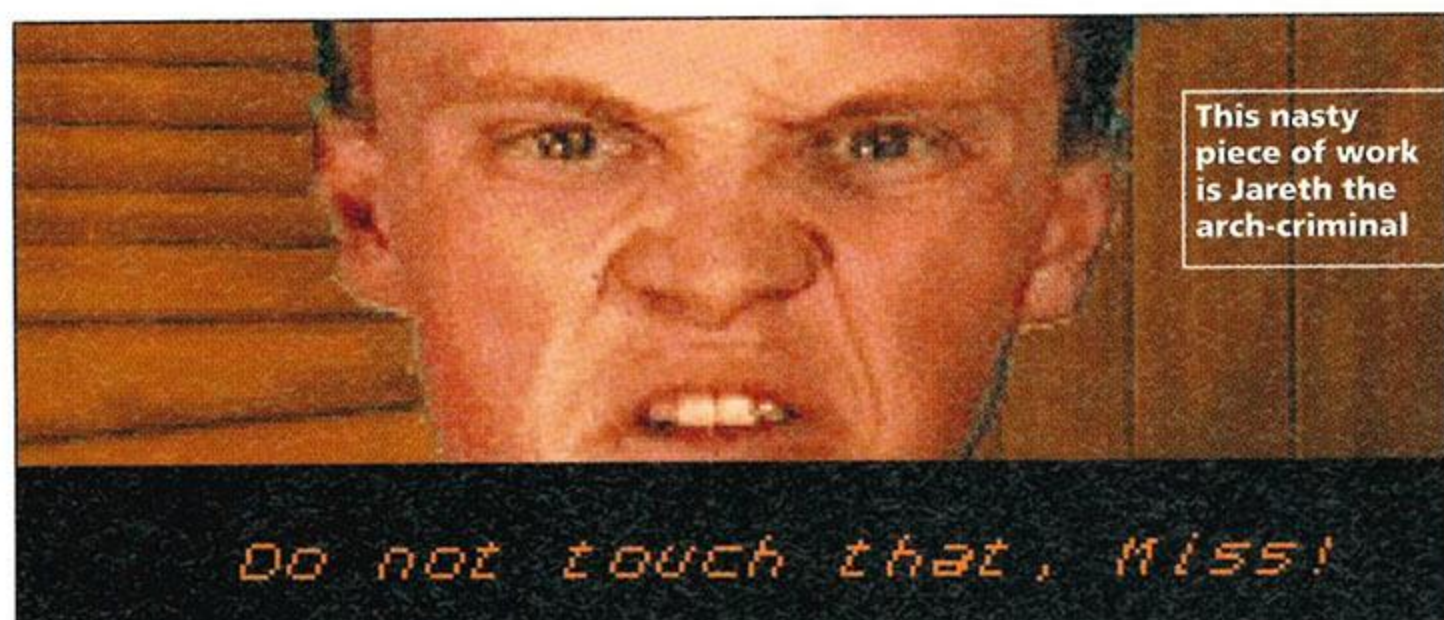
Doralice has to progress through the adventure by using her intelligence and imagination. There is no violence in sight! The plot of Lost in Time is, however, slightly confusing. If you're the sort of person who watched Back to the Future and couldn't handle the concept of time travel, then this may prove a bit of a mind boggler. In 2092 a criminal

called Jarleth steals the secret to a new atomic substance called Americium. In order to take over the world using this item he has to travel back in time 3000 years and hide it, so that over the centuries it becomes decontaminated.

At various points in history he travels back to make sure everything is alright with his treasure. At one point he hides it in a shipwreck close to a mansion.

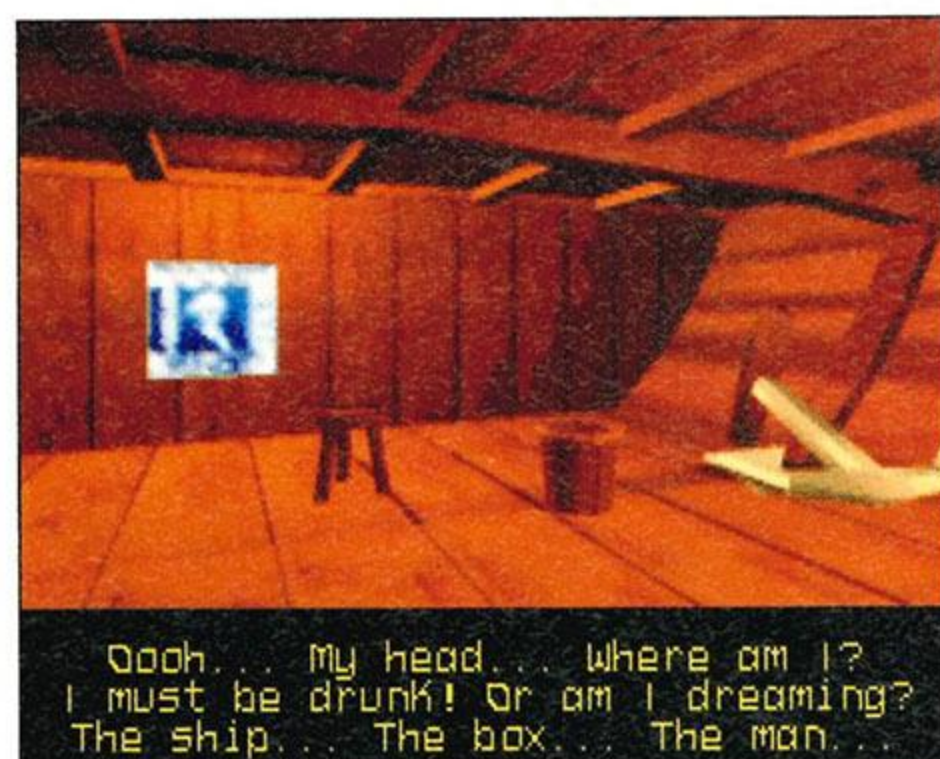
The trouble begins when Doralice inherits the mansion in 1992 and becomes a real problem for Jarleth by discovering his traces. The only way to eradicate the threat is for Jarleth to go further back to 1840 and destroy Doralice's great-grandfather. If she fails

LOST IN TIME (continued)



déjà-vu

How does this style of game compare with similar offerings? **Fascination** really isn't very good. The problems are largely unconventional and it just isn't fun to play. There's also a slightly tacky, pornographic undertone with the inclusion of naked shower scenes. On the other hand we have **Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis**. The fourth Indy game from Lucasfilms is a true masterpiece, which is now available on CD-ROM. The puzzles are brilliant and the sound and graphics are excellent. It is generally accepted as one of the best examples of this type of game, and well deserves its success.



Some objects can be used with other objects



Your diary will keep reminders of everything that happens in the game

The first glimpse you'll get of your prison ship when you wake up



► to stop this evil plan her own character will cease to exist.

If that all sounds too complicated, don't worry. We managed to play it quite successfully even before reading the manual. Only later when the gist of what was happening was revealed did we really need to read the plot.

The other characters in the game are all digitised actors and actresses and there are a lot of Full Motion Video sections which are presented when

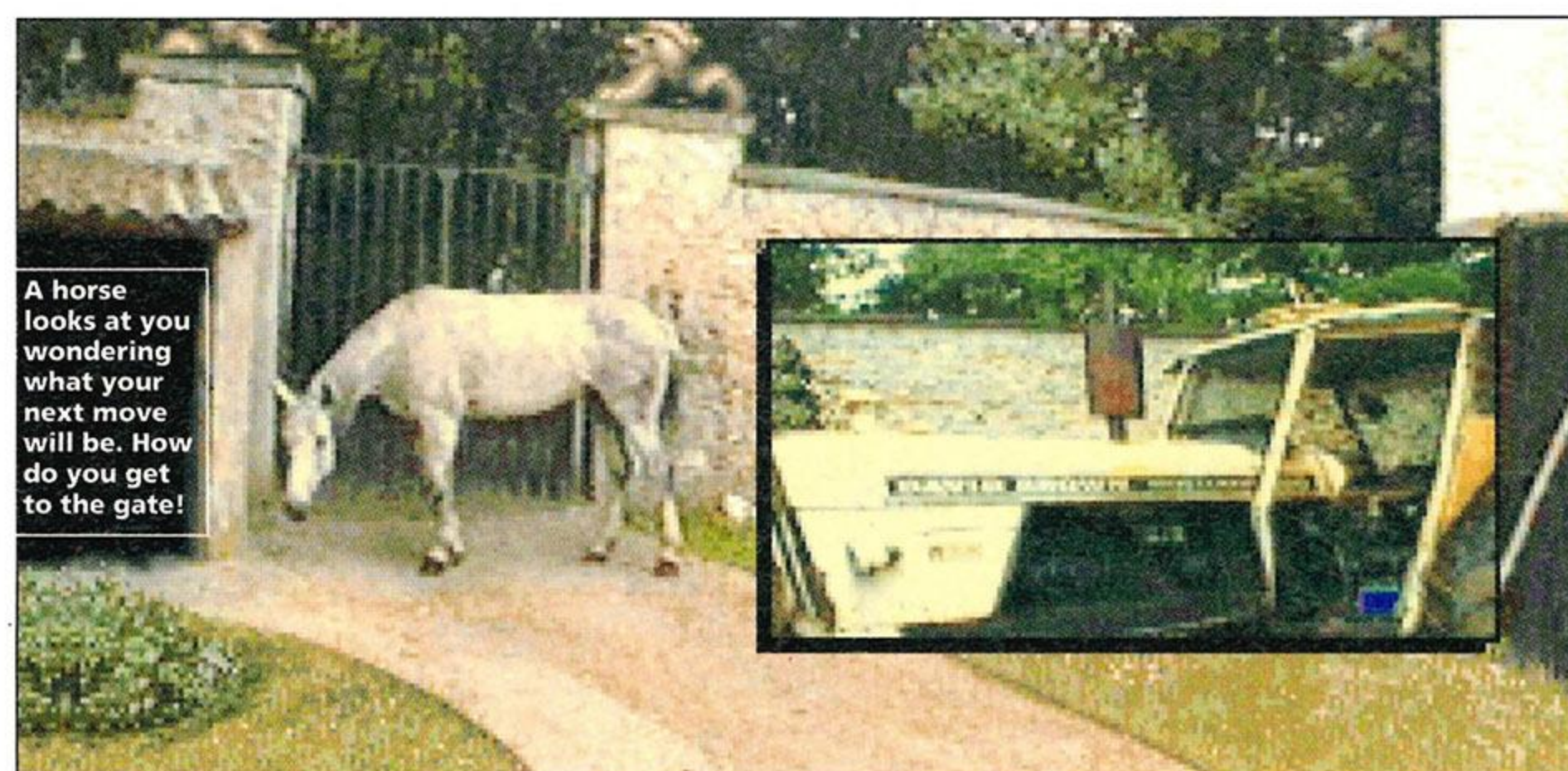
certain actions are performed. For example, moving the knife icon onto the hose will show a clip of someone cutting up a hose. All this helps to make the game look very refined and gives an overall feeling of achievement with every little bit of progress that is made.

This progress can, however, be quite tricky in places. Fortunately, most of the problems simply call for common sense.

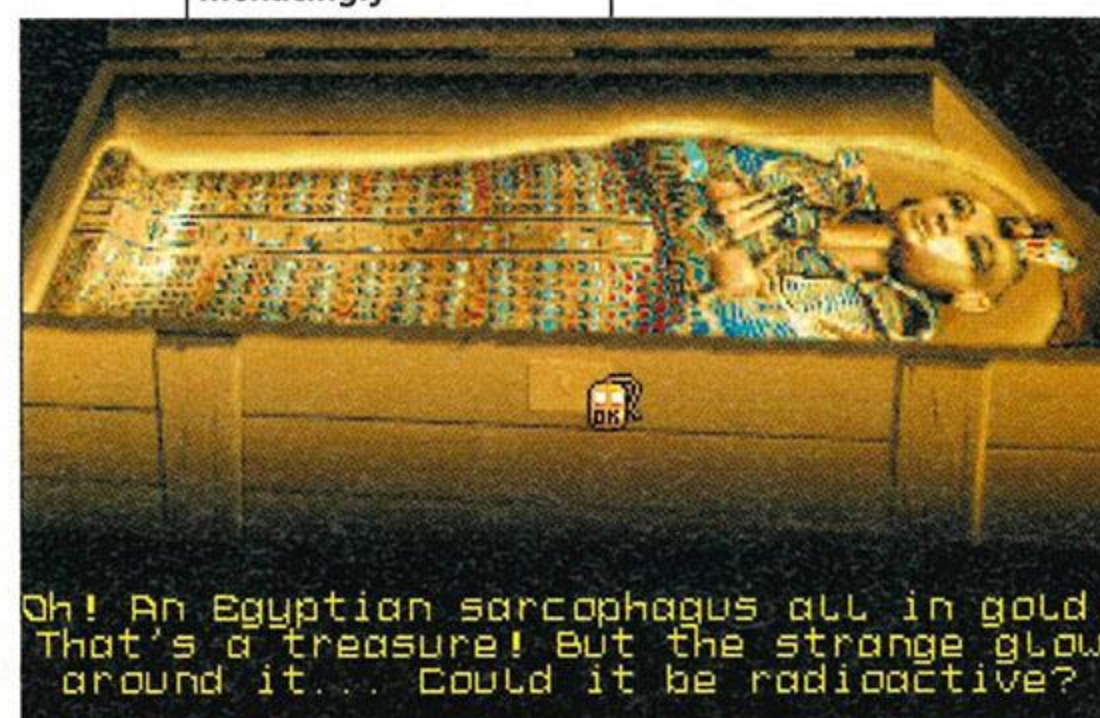
Operating the pump will clear the hold of the dirty water that is there

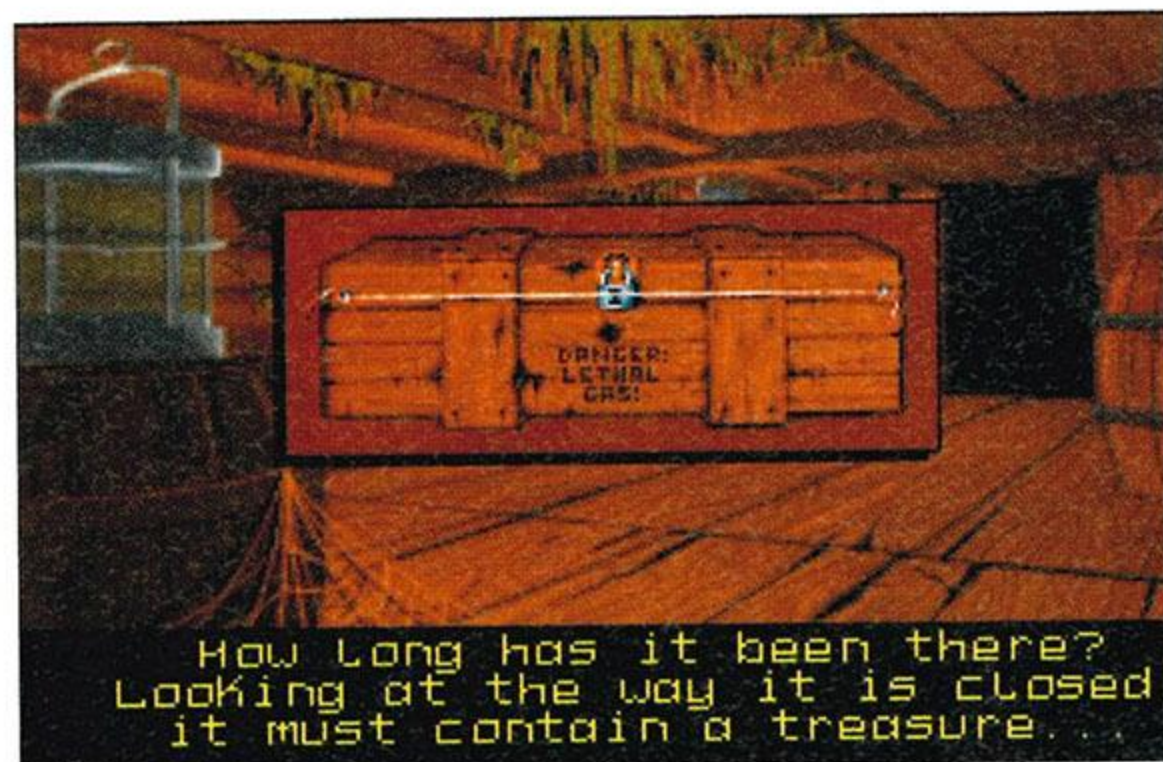
It is sometimes difficult to find all the objects that are needed, so careful examination of absolutely everything is necessary. If there is no solution to your problem, it's best to resort to trying everything on everything, and this should eventually solve any dilemmas.

'Intriguing gameplay and a lengthy challenge succeed in drawing you into the cinematic staging of events and a realistic plotline'

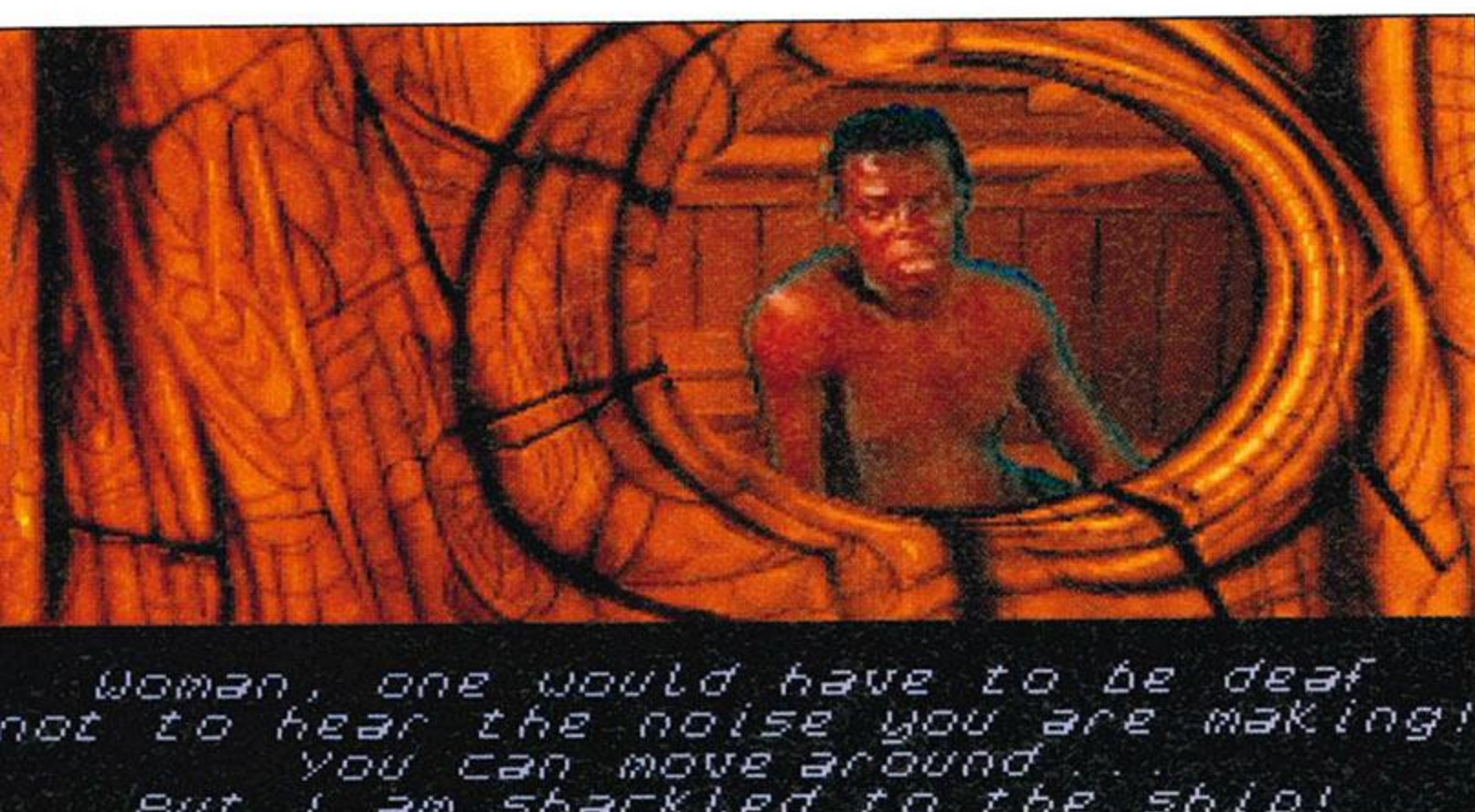


The Americium hidden in this golden sarcophagus glows menacingly





Something good must be stored in this secure container. Only imagination will help you get it open in time to save the world



A fellow prisoner stares balefully at you through the hole you have made

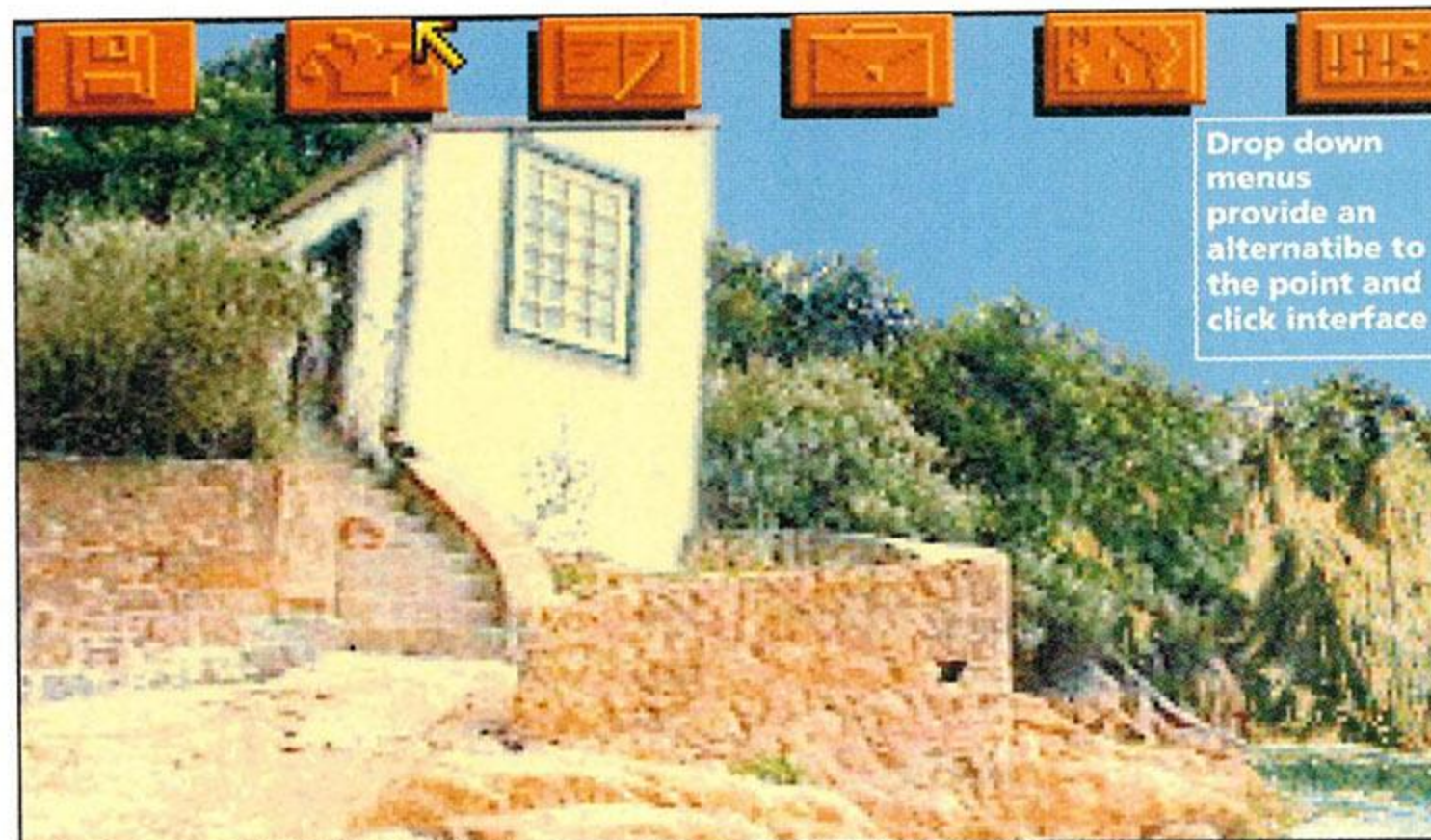
A useful feature that is supplied is the in-game help. This comes in the form of three Jokers. Selecting a joker brings up a concise description of how to solve the problem. However, the game is so intelligent that it saves the Jokers that have been used, meaning you can't keep using jokers and re-loading save games.

Muriel Tramis is the lady responsible for the storyline of *Lost in Time*. The original situation and ideas are mostly down to her. 'The Full Motion Video is an essential part of giving the game a shockingly realistic aspect,' she says. When you play *Lost* you enter 30 different worlds where you feel free to

move anywhere you like and free to decide on your actions.

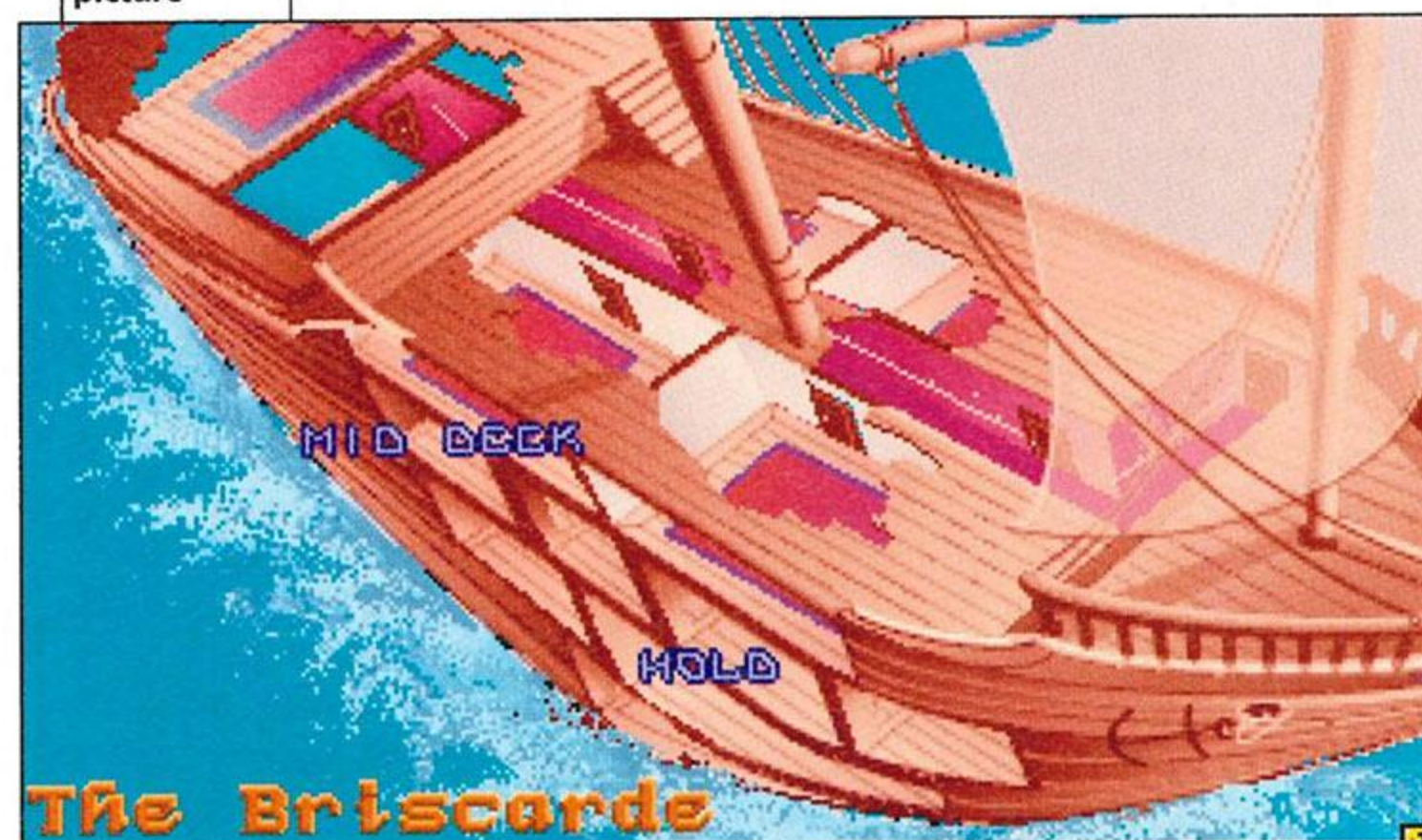
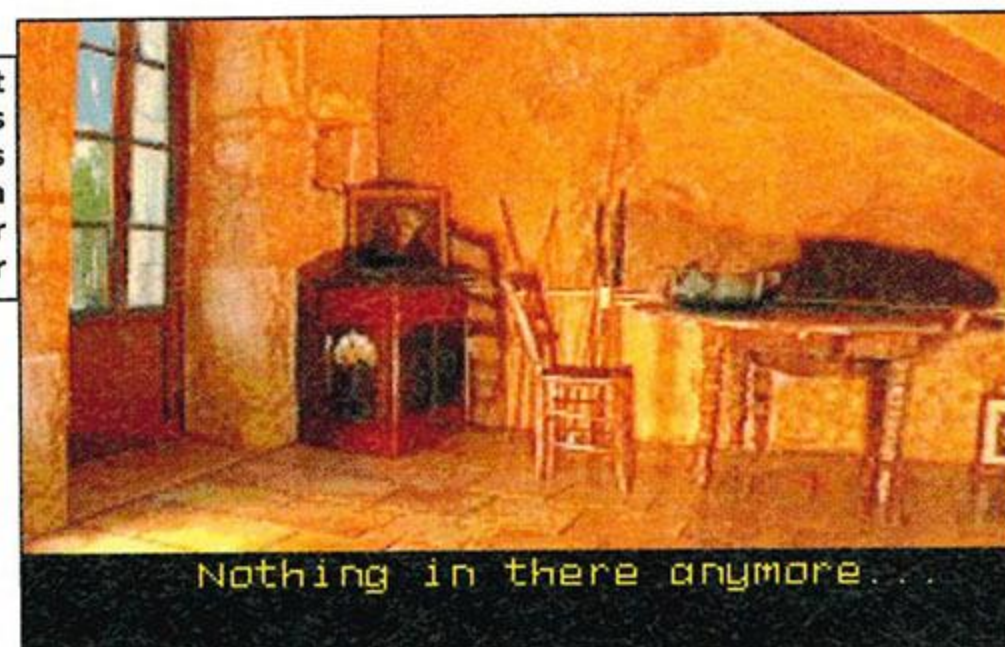
'I thought it would be nice for a change to have a female as the main role. Looking at the cinema today we find more and more exciting roles for females. Take Sigourney Weaver for instance who appeared in *Aliens*.'

Coktel Vision have plans to produce many more games featuring Doralice in the *Time* series, but details have got to be revealed. Watch PC Action in the future for news of all the latest developments.



You've cleared out everything in this room, so there is very little point in staying here for much longer

The ship is a real big old beast. So getting around it is a lot simpler with this picture



appraisal

At first I was extremely dubious about this game but within a couple of minutes I became totally engrossed. There are some tricky moments early on in the game but once you begin to master it and think in the same manner, everything starts to run smoothly. If you come across a rather difficult situation you can use the in-game help feature – a very useful addition to the game – and the problem can be easily solved. But it needs to be used sparingly. Graphically and sonically the game is superb. The Full Motion Video works a treat and all the locations have been beautifully digitised from real places in France. A lot of work has gone into this game to make it as realistic as possible. If you like adventure games and don't want another run-of-the-mill point and click

then this is certainly worth buying. I'm sure you won't be disappointed.

PAUL McNALLY

second opinion

It's quite refreshing to control a female protagonist in a graphic adventure and even more so when gameplay is not offset with the contrived sexism that permeated *Fascination*, another of Coktel's adventures. Neither is *Lost in Time* as linear as its predecessor; there's nothing more infuriating than your freedom of movement being stifled from one scene to the next. Here, fortunately, you have a great deal of room for exploration and digression and at no point do you actually die – also a bonus which allows you to get on with enjoying the game and not keep saving it in fear of reprisal. Each section of *Lost In Time* exists independently of the next and exhibits its

own inimitable style. In the scenes on the boat you're treated to 3D bitmapped graphics, whereas when you move onto the island full motion video comes into play to depict real locations and real pictures of the characters' interactions. It's just a shame that sound FX and (the lack of) music do in no way live up to the standards set by the graphics. A nice balance has been achieved as regards the puzzles themselves; they're neither too bizarre or unfeasible to become dumbfounding for beginners, nor too easy to let you whizz through the game sans probleme. The point and click interface is extremely manageable and, combined with intriguing gameplay and a lengthy challenge, succeeds in drawing you further into the cinematic staging of events and a realistic plotline.

SHARON GREAVES

PCA SCORE

83%

data bank

MINIMUM MEMORY
640k

MINIMUM PROCESSOR
286

OPTIMUM SPEED
16MHz

INSTALLATION
Yes

HARD DISK
9.4MB (16.8MB full installation)

GRAPHICS
VGA

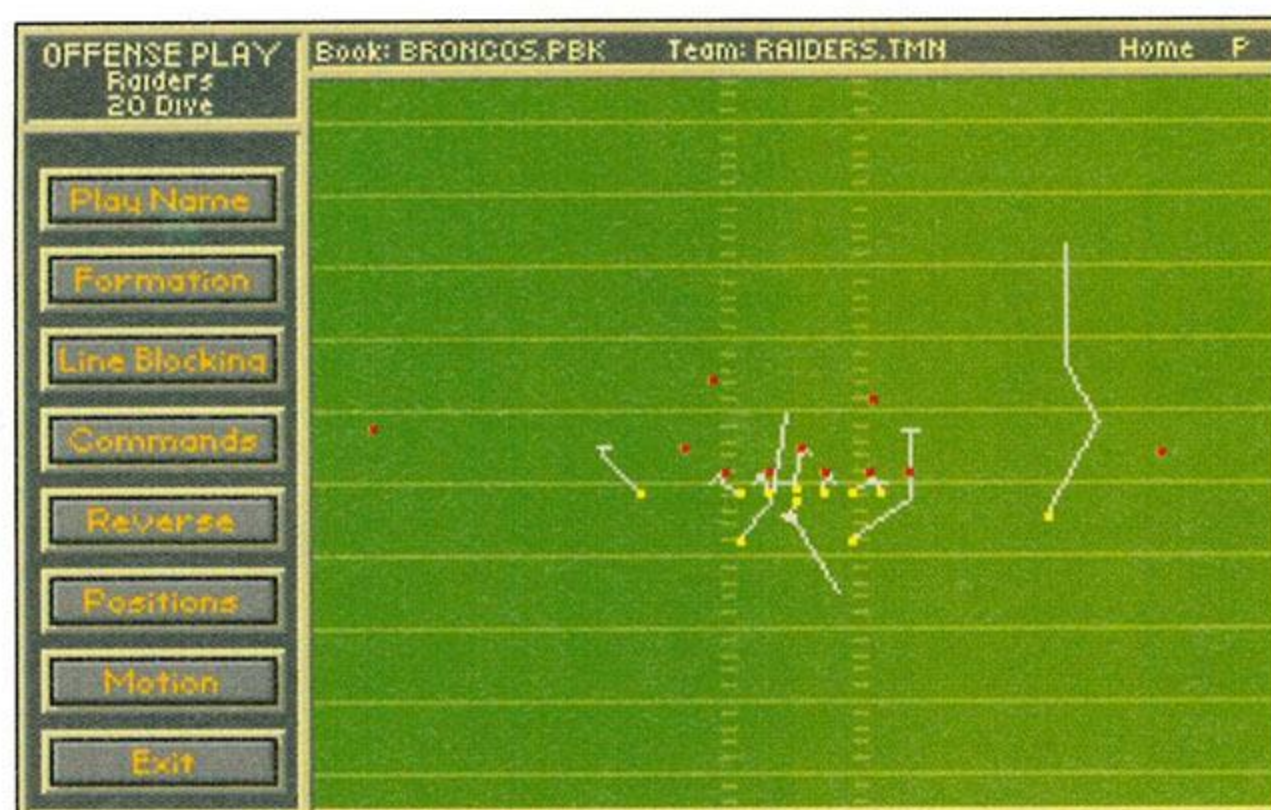
SOUND CARDS
Adlib, SoundBlaster

CONTROLS
Mouse

NFL COACHES CLUB FOOT

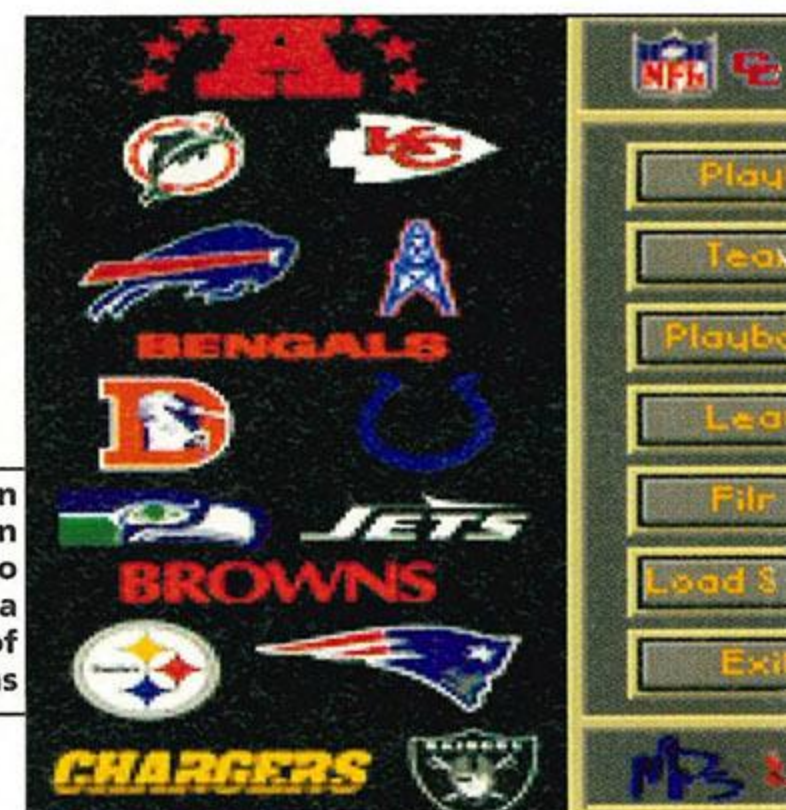
PUBLISHER MicroProse
CONTACT 0454 329510
TEAM In-house
PRICE £29.99
RELEASE DATE Out now

'Winning is like making love – you enjoy it so much the first time you want to do it again and again!'
 NIGEL MANSELL, 1985



Any of the plays supplied can be altered to any variation whatsoever

The main menu screen allows you to choose from a variety of options



To most British people, American Football is a phenomenon they can never hope to understand. To an American the game is more than a way of life, it's an entire culture...



Coaching at half time gives you hints on how to win

The boom over recent years in Britain for American Football all coincided with Channel 4's brave decision to televise the sport several years ago. Using cleverly edited highlights, all the action of a four hour game was compacted into less than an hour. The boring waits were stripped out and a vibrant package was left over to appeal to all different ages.

As people got used to the game, the strategies and intricacies became more important. So that's the problem that anybody trying to produce a decent computer version of the game now faces. Even in this country, we want and need the stats. An all action game like John Madden Football on the Mega Drive will simply not do.

MicroProse have got the right idea, as they have gone out and spent an awful lot of

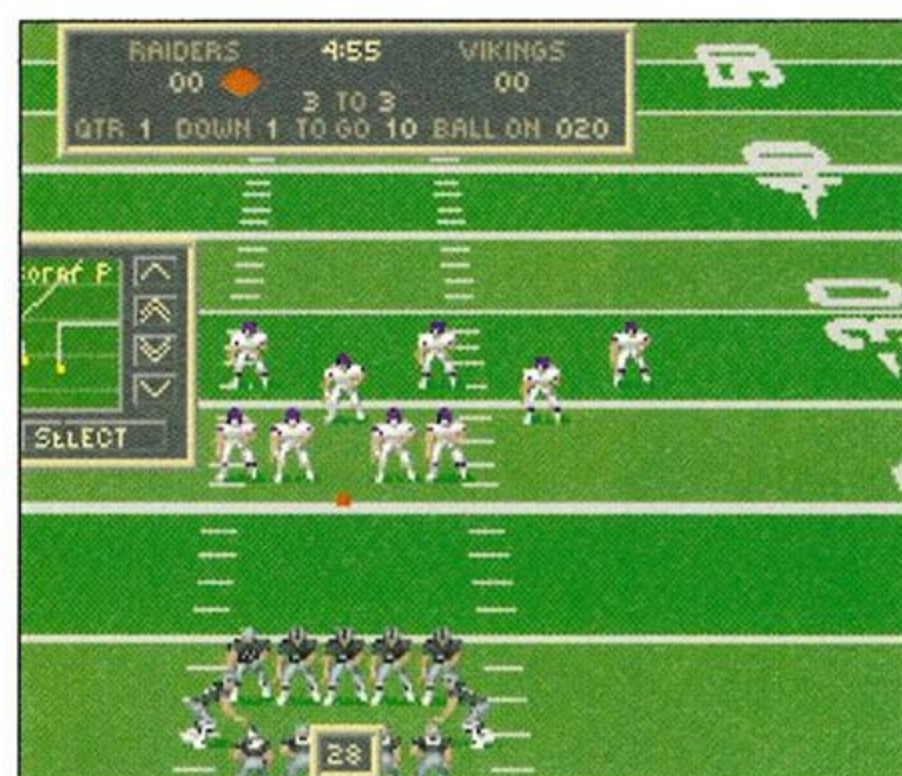
money in obtaining the official NFL licence. This means that they are effectively the only company allowed to make a game using the kits, badges and real player names.

There are few acceptable versions of the game out on the PC. Front Page Sports Football from Dynamix is about the best, but even that is ever so slow. CCF on the other hand is an all-action simulation with every little detail provided. Official playbooks are included for each of the NFL teams, so you can run the plays that are on the TV.

There are two ways to play this version of football. Coaching mode provides the opportunity to play without the frantic play-running, and calling the shots is the only effort required. In real life it's the coaches that win matches, in NFL things are exactly the same. Decide which plays to run and watch in horror as everything falls apart.

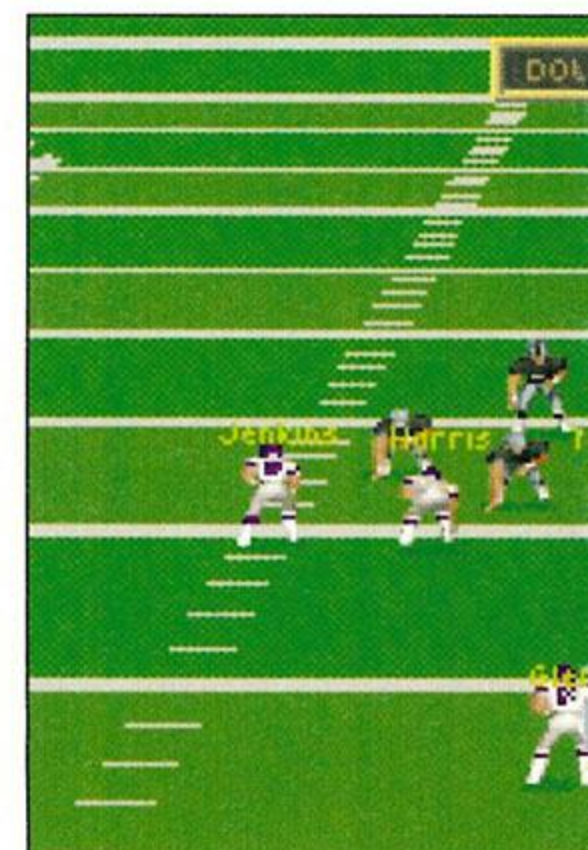
The second option is the Action mode

The offence are away and there could be some points on the cards shortly. NFL has all the official team names included for reference



The huddle is where the team decides which plays come next. Then it's off to the snap for the play

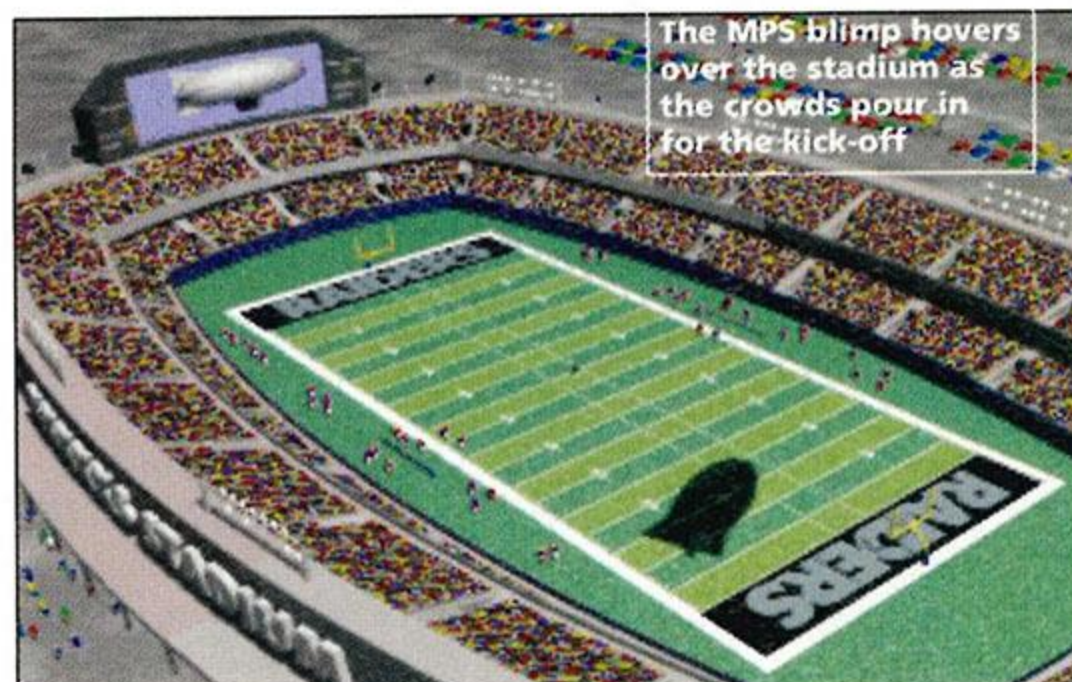
Any of the views can be selected to watch the action. The side on is good to see the tackles broken



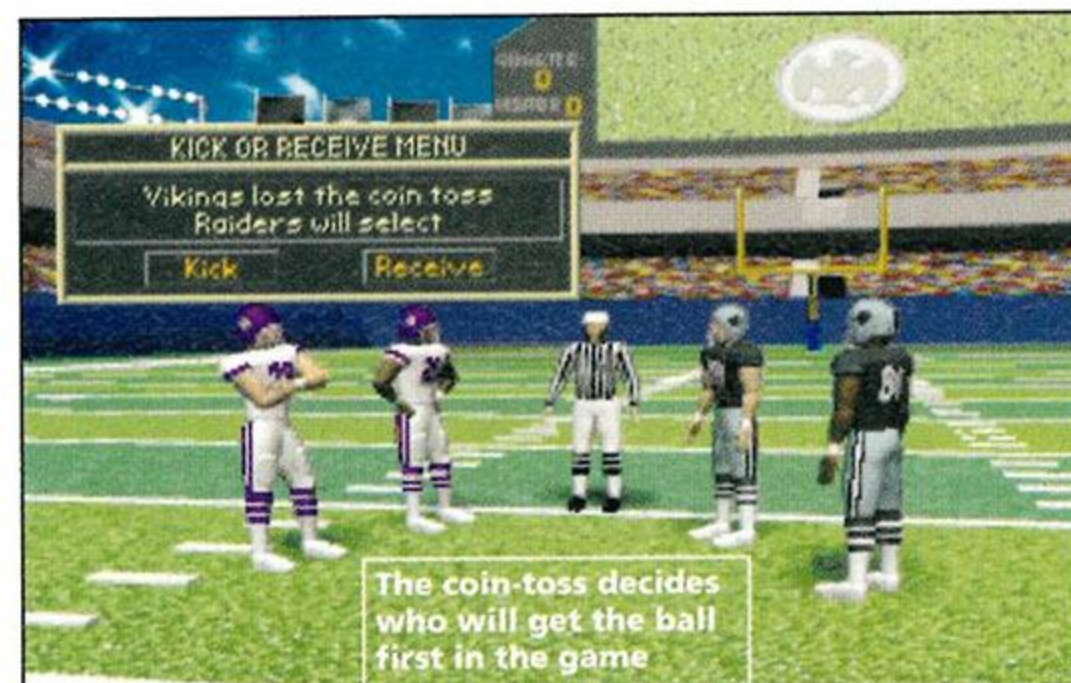
which is true to its name. Everything is controlled by you: passing, running, tackling. Get one thing wrong and you are on the end of a bashing. Any of the teams can be chosen in either a one or two player game. Obviously things are more fun when there are more people playing but the computer still puts up a tremendous fight especially if the novice level has been turned off.

All the best coaches in the NFL have a series of special plays that become their trademark. Each coach knows whether his team's

BALL

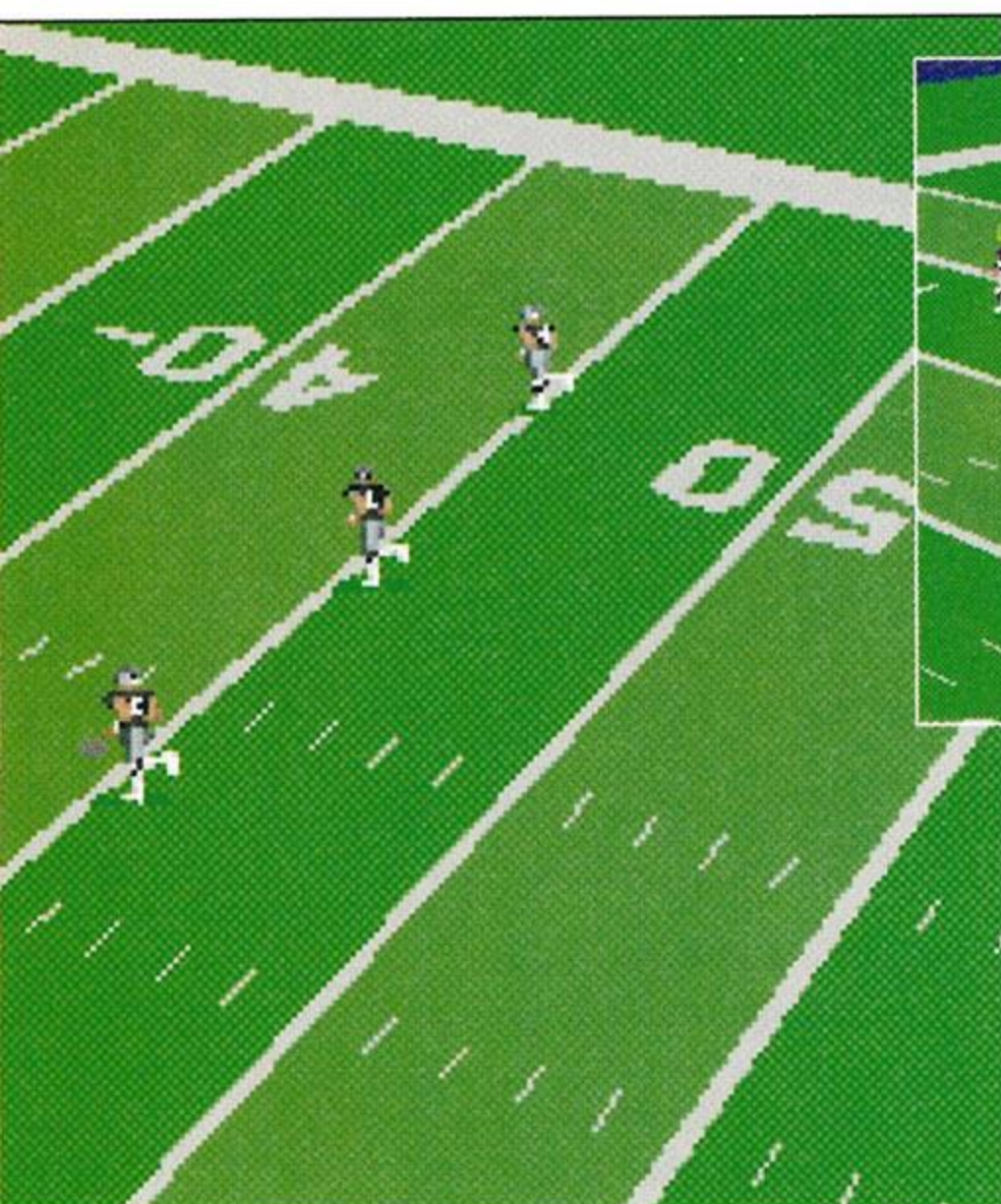


The MPS blimp hovers over the stadium as the crowds pour in for the kick-off

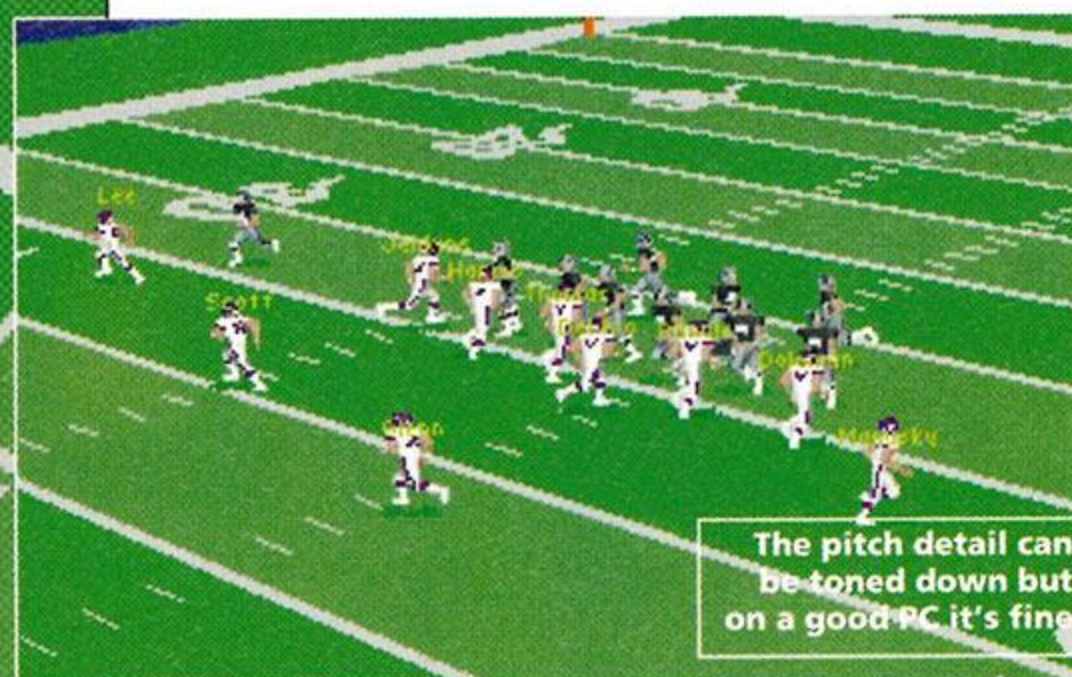


The coin-toss decides who will get the ball first in the game

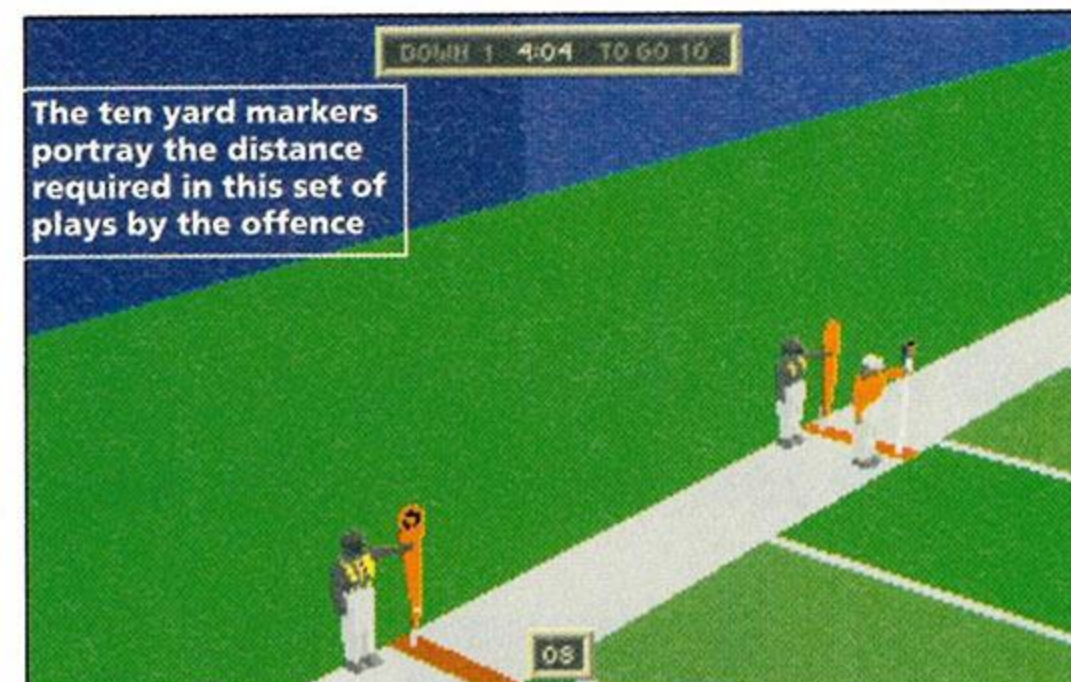
'A good all-round finished product'



The pitch can be rotated 360 degrees so the action can be viewed from any angle



The pitch detail can be toned down but on a good PC it's fine



The ten yard markers portray the distance required in this set of plays by the offence

Once all the options have been selected and the teams are chosen, the game scrolls to a view of the crowds pouring into the stadium as a blimp circles the area. The coin toss follows and then it's into the action.

The points that generally take a game from above being

simply average are the little touches that make it appear as though so much extra effort has been put in. CCF wins hands down over the competition because of its flexibility. The action can be viewed from potentially every conceivable angle. The names of the players can be on screen at all times so picking the best receivers for a pass is extremely easy.

And so to kick off. The ball is given a hefty boot and the poor soul who faces the first bone-crunching tackle catches it and heads off towards a wall of flesh.

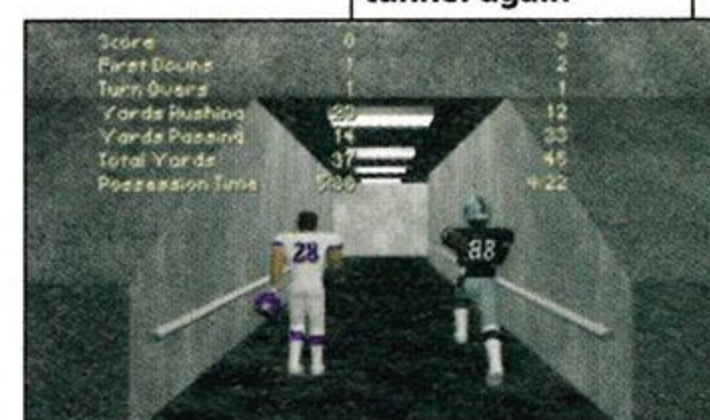
Once he's been stretched off the tactical decisions have to start being made. Four quarters of 15 minutes and then it's all over. Detailed statistics can be obtained on virtually anything right up to how much coke the players had (allegedly!). If the game was simply an Exhibition match the result means nothing to anyone, but if it was a Season game there are another 15 to play and then maybe the play-offs after that.

Game sound is worth a mention.

If you have a SoundBlaster plugged in you'll be treated to a wealth of digitised samples. Grunts, groans and real referees calling the penalties add to the atmosphere. If a penalty does occur and the referee shouts out what's happened, even the echo of the microphone can be heard over the tannoy. A small detail, but one neat little touch.

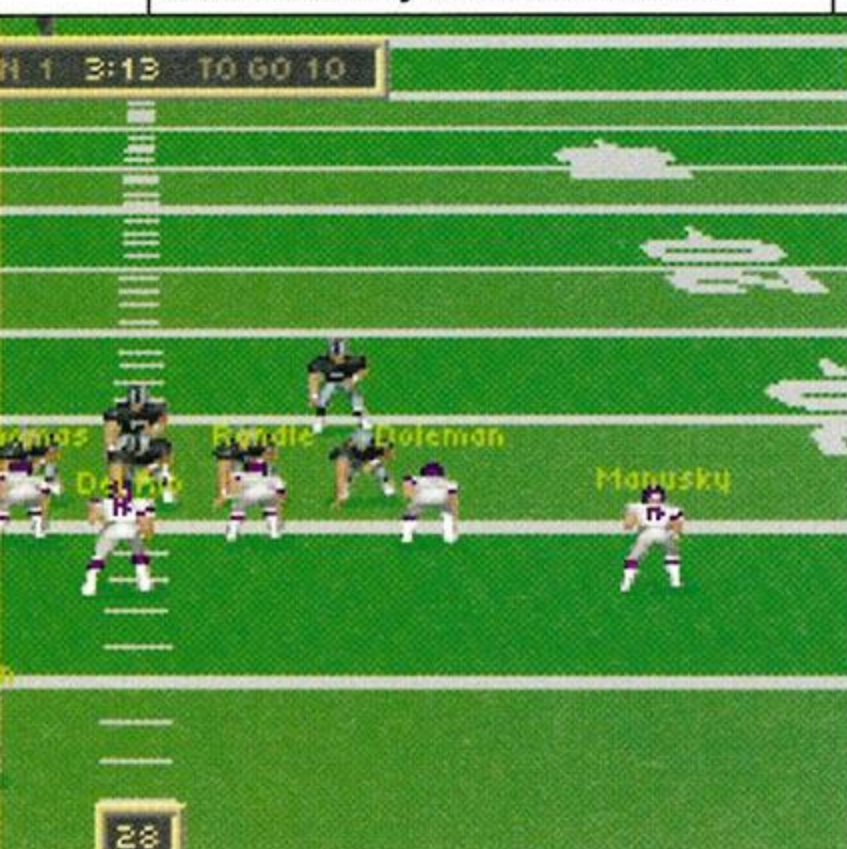
Everything about NFL Coaches Club Football comes across as being really polished. MicroProse haven't been responsible for many sports simulations in the past but it looks like they now have a good winner on their hands here.

It's half-time and the players trudge wearily down the tunnel again



strengths lie in offence or attack, and their playbook will reflect that. Since a team is only as good as the playbook, adapting yours is of paramount importance. Any of the included plays can be altered entirely or just fine tuned to suit the needs of the roster. New plays can be developed and practised from scratch and it could turn out that a new move wins the SuperBowl.

The clock is running down and time is short if the Raiders are to make a comeback. Only three minutes left



appraisal

I was actually quite keen on Front Page Sports Football until I started playing this. It's so much faster, more playable and easy to get into. Maybe it's because I'm not American but I still found the idea of designing plays more than a little daunting and tended to steer clear of this. It's all good fun though and the NFL licence will add that extra bit of interest for fans. Even the packaging looks nice. A good all-round polished product that deserves considerable success. As to whether you should buy Front Page Pro, that's tricky. The answer is probably.

PAUL McNALLY

second opinion

Front Page Sports Football has, until now, been the only decent American Football Simulator on the market. MicroProse's attempt is better in many ways although the little things that made FPS so good originally aren't there. Pitch detail is a more limited, trades are missing and lots of the information hasn't been included. On the plus side all the NFL player names are in there and the actual game section is much better and easier to play. The perfect game would be a hybrid between the two. As it stands NFL is worth a purchase

STEVE WHITE

PCA SCORE **84%**

data bank

MINIMUM MEMORY
590k

MINIMUM PROCESSOR
386

OPTIMUM SPEED
20MHz

INSTALLATION
Essential

HARD DISK
5MB

GRAPHICS
VGA

SOUND CARDS
Adlib, Roland, SoundBlaster

CONTROLS
Joystick, Mouse, Keyboard

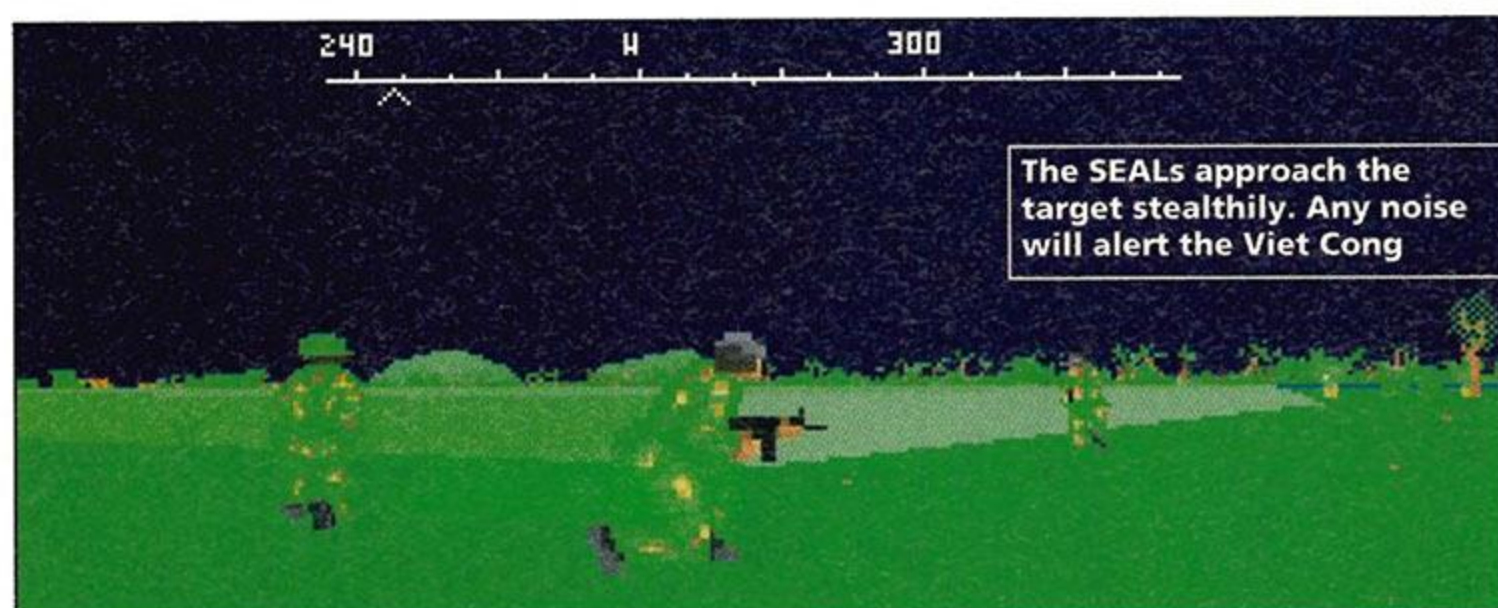
SEAL TEAM

PUBLISHER Electronic Arts
CONTACT 0753 549442
TEAM EA USA
PRICE £44.99
RELEASE DATE Out now

'Vietnam was what we had instead of happy childhoods'

MICHAEL HERR BORN 1940

Choose your Point Man from any of the four available in the year 1966



UDT/SEAL Training School

Previous Recruit	Start Campaign
Next Recruit	1966

Biography	Rating
Seaman SEAL Team 1 Max Huerara 22 Years Old Roswell, NM Best Weapon: CAR15 Commando	 6 ft 3 in 185 lbs BUD/S Class 88 Camouflage: Tiger Stripe

Vietnam is an ever popular subject as well as a touchy one. EA set out to touch a few nerves with Seal Team



Your man is dead and the evacuation starts. The survivors are airlifted back to HQ

When a game's major character is a soldier, it tends to be in the Commando style. Running around the screen killing everybody in an arcade frenzy doesn't really epitomise what war is all about. Now, Seal Team from Electronic Arts attempts to straighten it all out.

The scenario is the Vietnam war. The game is played from an American point of view and free rein is given over the

soldiers in control. It may seem politically and morally unsound, but it is a fact of war that innocent people often suffer most.

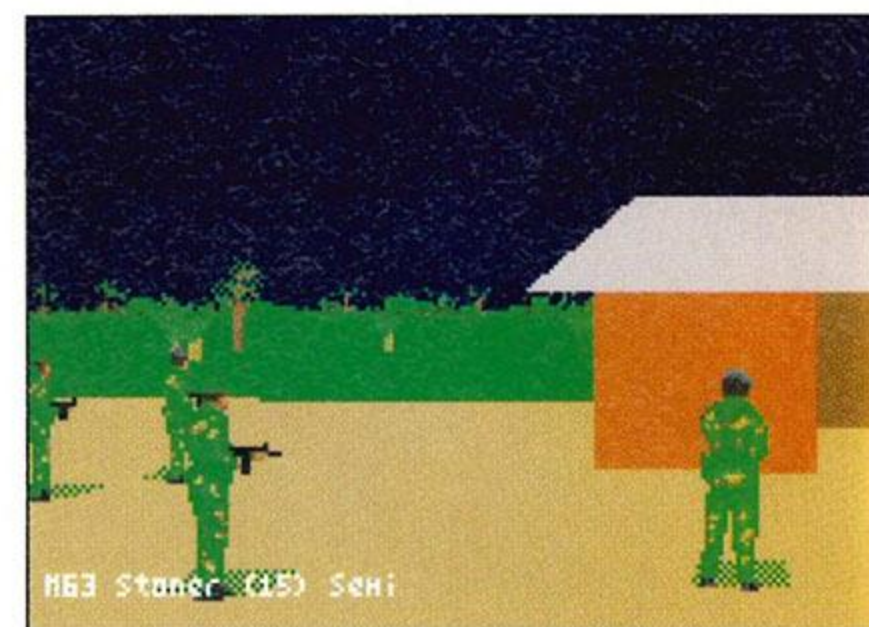
Seal Team is different from any other game available at the moment. The player is in charge of the soldier and his actions, and any rash decisions you take can result in your platoon facing heavy losses. There's no point in just dashing into unknown situations only to watch all the soldiers in the local area get obliterated by enemy fire.

The Point Man, as he is known, is the man who is at the front of any patrol. His job is to spot traps, the enemy, call in support and so on. If the Point Man is hopeless at his job, everybody gets killed. Guess who's the Point Man?

Before any fighting can go ahead a decision has to be made to either practise or begin a campaign. The missions are all difficult so it is always worth having a practice before going hell for leather in the real war zone. There are four different



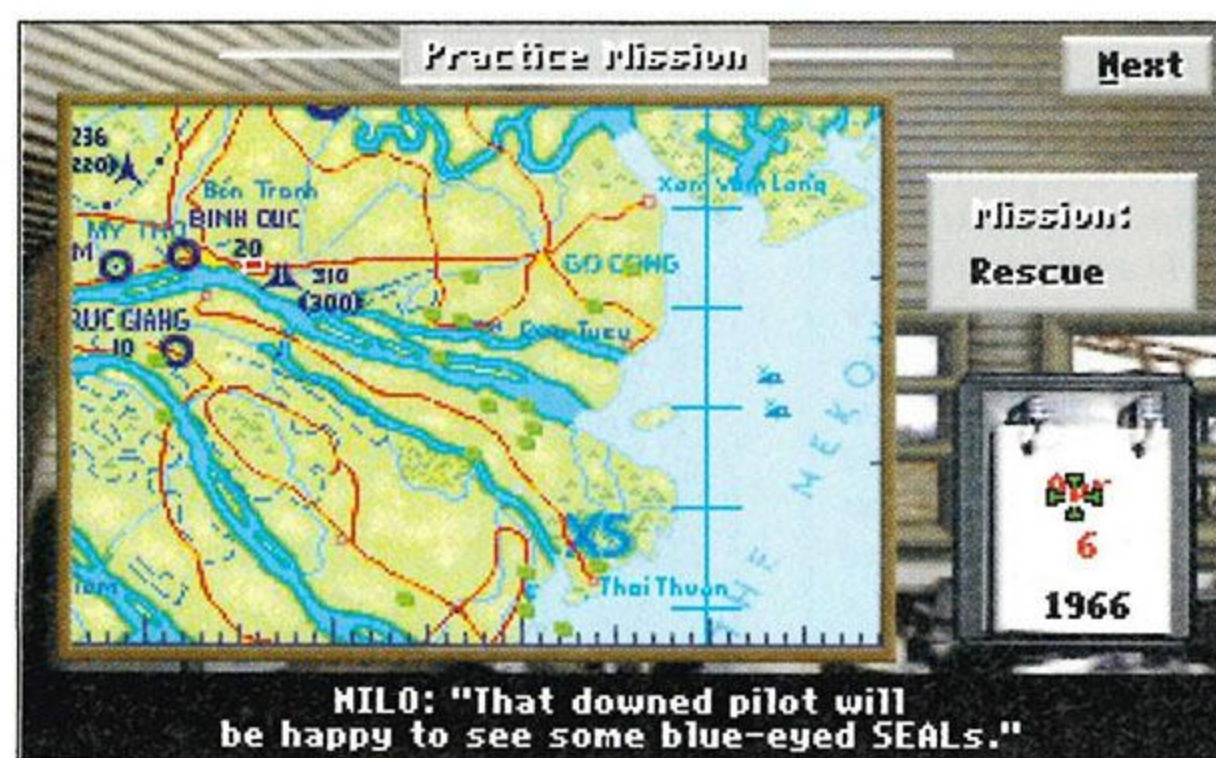
CAR15 Commando (2) Semi



The Seal Team surround the hooch and prepare to secure the area, taking as many prisoners as possible in the process

Tours of Duty that can be undertaken. They start in 1966 and range up until 1969. The later the tour, the more difficult the missions. The idea is to get the Point Man through the war without getting him killed. His death automatically means the end of the campaign and then it's back to the beginning once again – unless you make good use of the savegame feature.

After a campaign is selected a decision has to be made as to what weaponry your platoon will carry with them on the forthcoming mission. Extra grenades may be useful on certain raid missions, while others may require the use of some heavier artillery, such as rocket launchers. Care must be taken not to carry too much or the Point Man will

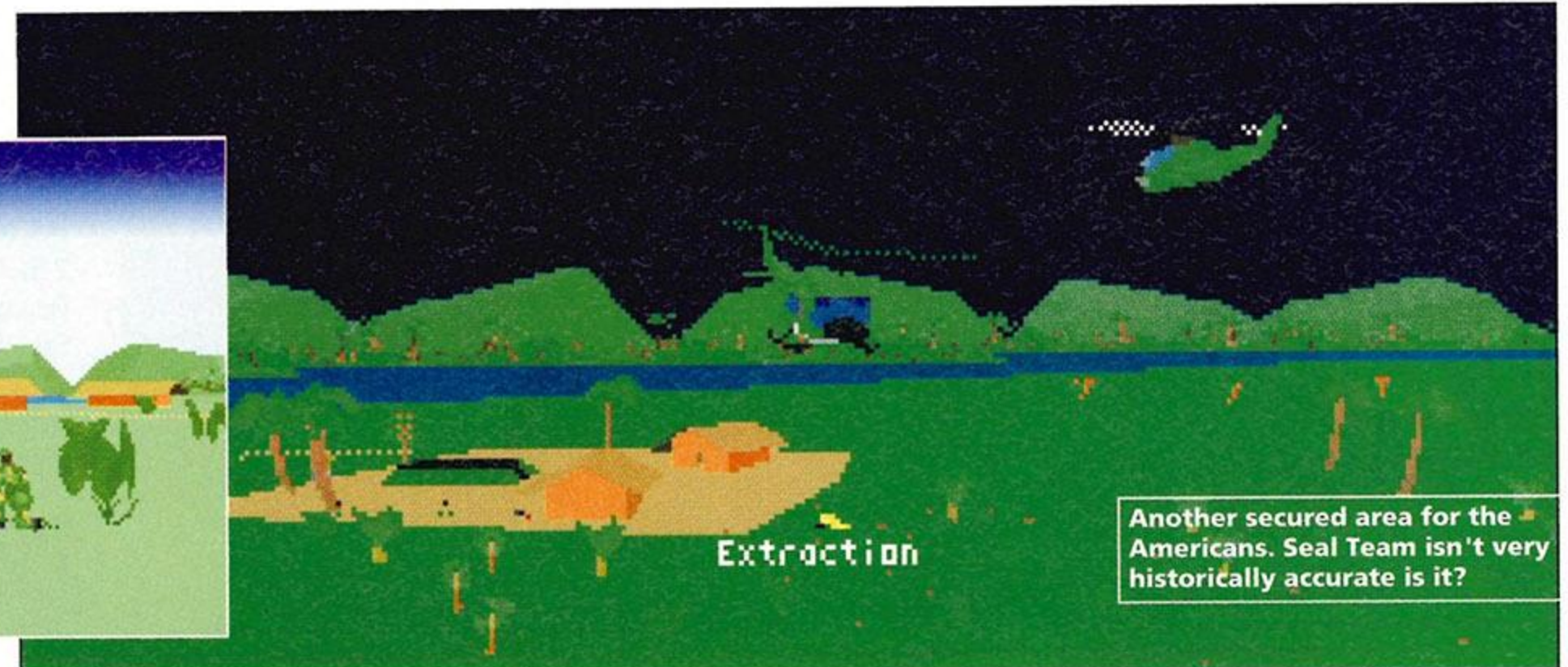
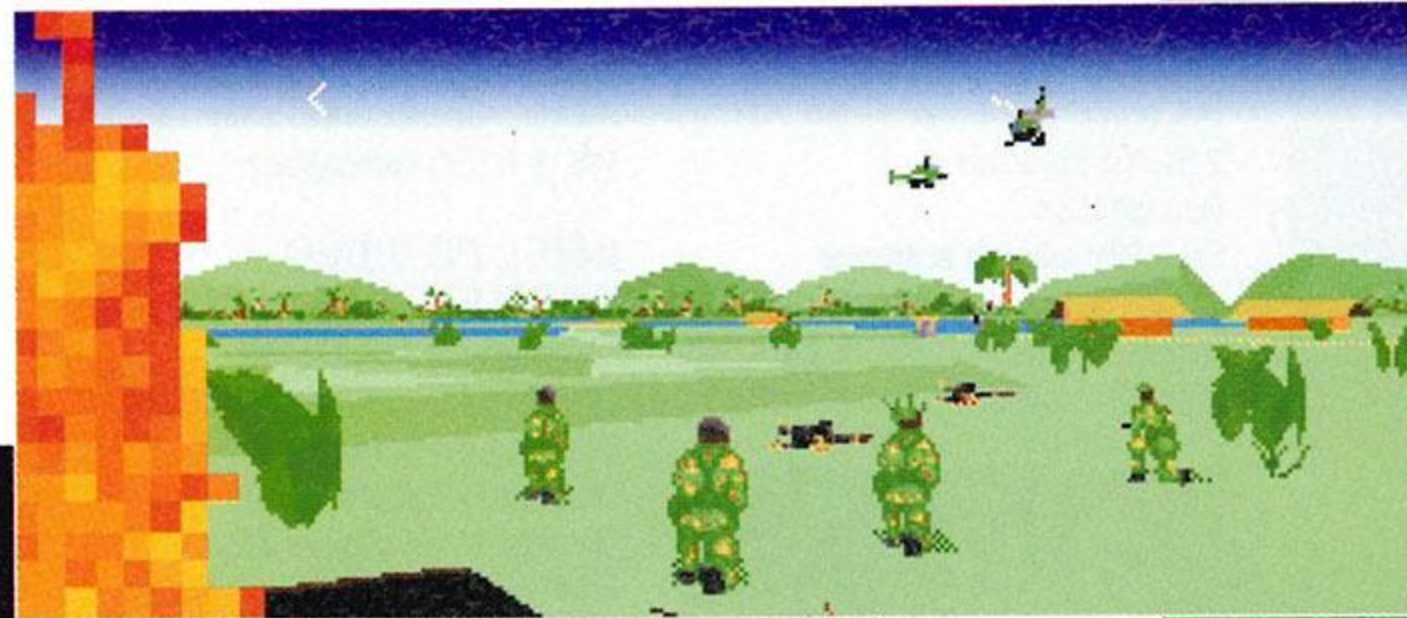
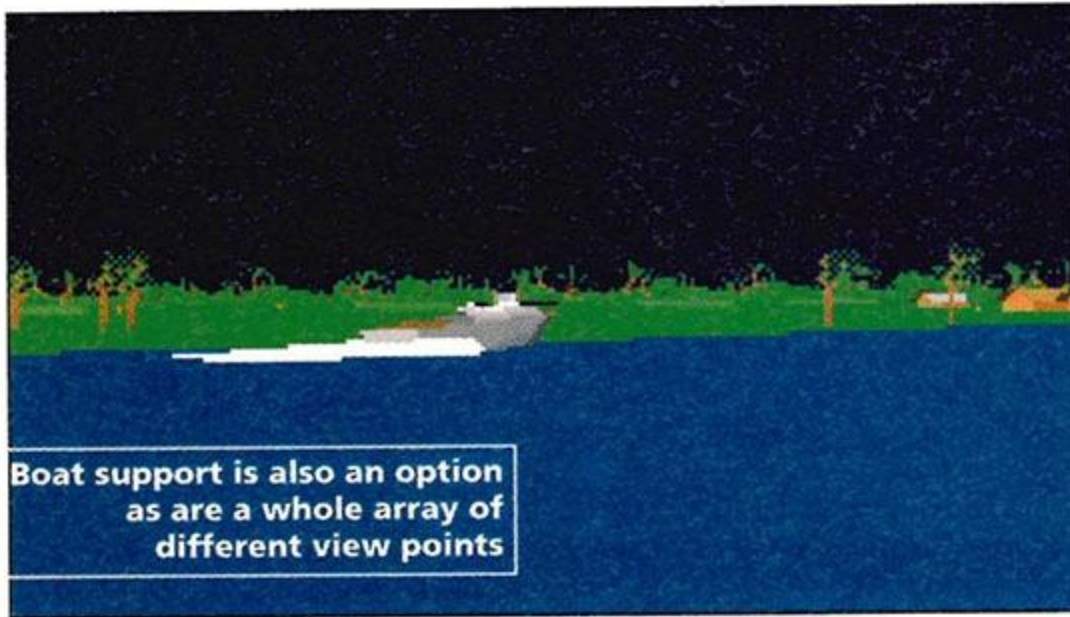


The Practice Mission is a very valuable option until you get used to things

HILO: "That downed pilot will be happy to see some blue-eyed SEALs."



'Seal Team could well turn out to be the way forward as far as wargames go'



be slowed down, which is of little use in an ambush as you will all get wiped out.

Seal Team is controlled from two screens. The first is the main view. The area is viewed in first person perspective as the platoon makes its way through the jungle. Buildings and bushes can play havoc with your plans as you never know if there will be a receptive Viet Cong ambush party hidden around the next corner. There's nothing worse than that sinking feeling as six or seven NVAs come running out of a building and kill off the boys.

That's where Seal Team comes into its own. It is very easy to start feeling for the soldiers as you watch them die through your mistakes. This is quite strange as they are just obviously a bunch of computer pixels with no right to sympathy.

Electronic Arts have really come into their own in creating an atmosphere for this game. The mood it generates is second to none. This is all helped by the music which is fine if you have a SoundBlaster, but if you're lucky enough to have a Roland LAPC tucked in there as well, then a real treat is in store.

If you were to see this game over a friend's shoulder you may not like what you see. We had it running on a 486 at 50Mhz and it still appeared slow. Things are different if you are playing it yourself, as speed is not so noticeable. However, it may not be advisable to try it on a low-end 386 as there could be

countless problems. The packaging suggests a 486 and it certainly isn't a scare story. But back to the action.

It is possible to evacuate your men if things start going badly for you, such as if two men are dead and the Point Man heavily wounded. An air strike can be called at any time as can a chopper to get the guys out.

Once back at base there are two reports that can be displayed. The Post-Mission report gives an accurate account of who's been killed and how, while the Historic report will generally be a total mis-representation of the true facts. For

example, if two men die the report may say that everybody has survived and there have been no friendly casualties. All propaganda, and very disturbing indeed when you realise that this nature of behaviour actually happened during the war.

For a game that comes on just two disks and takes less than four meg of hard drive space, Seal Team is totally mind-blowing. Not everybody will like it and that's a shame because it is excellent once you know what you are doing. If the machine you have is up to it, then buy Seal Team and give it a whirl today.

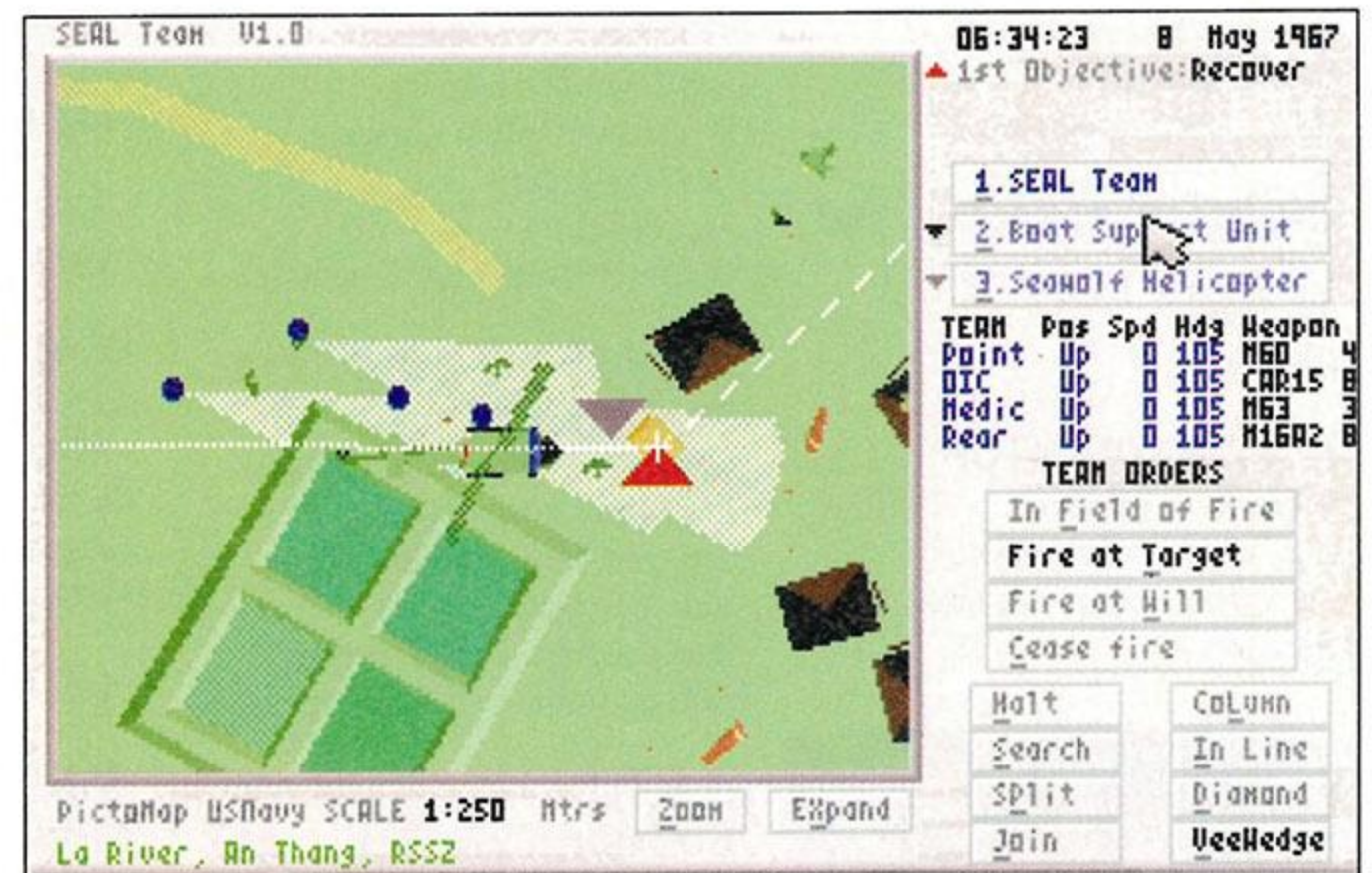
appraisal

When I first saw this game I wasn't overly impressed. However, once stuck into gameplay itself I slowly began to realise just how good it actually can be, particularly when you start to really soak up the atmosphere as the tension builds while you watch the men around you die

and gamble with their lives. It will probably take a good couple of hours to get into Seal Team properly and appreciate it for what it is, and then a good few more to get out of it again. All said and done, it's rather a good game which at least deserves to be seen by all.

PAUL McNALLY

PCA SCORE **86%**



The Map mode supplies you with an overall view of the surrounding area and local enemy positions and hooches

data bank

MINIMUM MEMORY
590+2MB

MINIMUM PROCESSOR
386 (486 Recommended)

OPTIMUM SPEED
33MHz

INSTALLATION
Yes

HARD DISK
3.8MB

GRAPHICS
VGA

SOUND CARDS
Roland, SoundBlaster

CONTROLS
Joystick, Mouse



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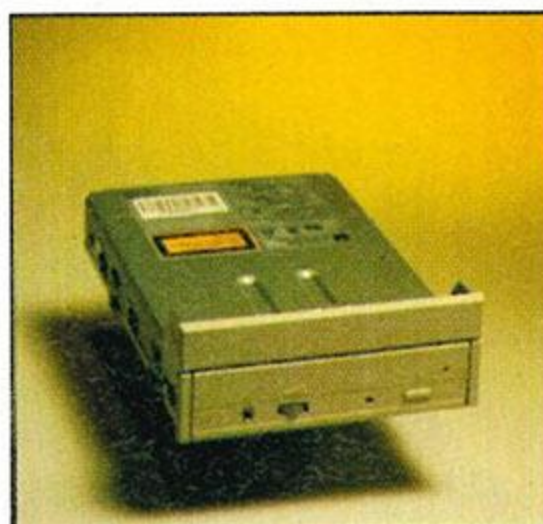
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the class of autumn '93

Games on the PC don't date as soon as they've been on the shop shelves a couple of weeks. Some of the best releases are a year or two old. That's why PC Action gives to you now an update of games that have hit your local emporiums over the last three months. Alongside these are mini reviews of all those releases that just couldn't be squeezed in elsewhere. The aim is to give you a taster of what else is on the market

Day of the Tentacle Pioneering such developments as the SCUMM and IMUSE adventure systems, LucasArts' latest adventure was destined to be nothing short of a masterpiece - and Day of the Tentacle is just that. The plot revolves around four American students who have been caught up in a thickening plot of terror and time travel. A Mad scientist, Fred 'Ed' Edison has created a lab in which he is building a time machine.

One of his two tentacle pals takes a slug of some toxic waste from Ed's lab that has been released into a stream and turns psycho with plans to dominate the entire world.

You play the parts of Bernard, a computer whiz-kid, Hoagie, a typical American kid and Laverne, a neurotic



medical student in a journey across time to save the infected tentacle and undo the harm caused by Ed.

As with past LucasArts' adventures, the graphics are beautifully drawn and animated and the time share facility of characters throughout the different time zones works very well indeed. The humour is adequate, if somewhat of the American High School variety and the plot seems to come together very nicely.

It is in the implementation of the plot that Day of the Tentacle loses points, for the game is nowhere near as confounding as LucasArts' previous graphic adventures. With a bit of forethought and diligent clicking on every object with every other object, solutions are not too incredibly difficult to come by.

Nonetheless, the game does cater for any level of player and it really is an excellent example of PC power in terms of what can be achieved with games nowadays. A good fun romp in a fantasy world à la Scooby-Doo is a treat every player must sit down and enjoy.

US Gold/LucasArts

£42.99

CD ROM £45.99

Strike Commander It is in the flight simulation genre that the PC really excels above all other computer formats and Strike Commander has just pushed that lead even further.

With incredibly detailed graphics and amazing speech, Strike Commander takes a different perspective on the usual military flight simulation roles.

You play a part in a mercenary group of Top Gun pilots armed with F-16 Fighting Falcons and the latest hi-tech weaponry. You fight for no particular side because in your game money talks - he who offers the most gets the best.

An interesting side track to the game are the animated sequences that link a plot to the whole affair. These scenes give you more of an incentive as well as informing you and your team just how well you are doing. Everything costs money, including weapons, so mission success is a must.

What attracted us most to Strike Commander was the incredibly detailed graphics and amazing atmosphere that makes you feel as if you're really there. It's also very



refreshing to see a different and original plot, and the animated scenes emerge as a welcome break from the hectic in-flight action.

The missions themselves are quite difficult to complete so regular saving should be performed. Strike Commander is the kind of game you show off to your friends when you are in a boastful mood.

Unfortunately, you do need to have a very powerful PC such as a 486DX 33Mhz to gain maximum enjoyment from it. Include the speech pack, which will set you back another £20 and you're going to need to reserve around 40MB on your hard drive. Something few PC owners have access to at the moment.

Electronic Arts

£49.99

X-Wing At long last, a worthy computer game based around the Star Wars theme is here. Well, it's taken a long time coming but it appears that the waiting has certainly been worthwhile.

Continuing LucasArts' history of excellent products, X-Wing is definitely the best to date. Based closely around the Star Wars fighter of the same name, X-Wings takes



you on a hair-raising journey around George Lucas's incredible imagination, set a long, long time ago...

You can choose to fly the Rebel Alliance X-Wing, Y-Wing, B-Wing and A-Wing against the Emperor's dark and evil forces of Star Destroyers and Imperial Tie Fighters. The actual pre-mission graphics are very atmospheric and guaranteed to drive Star Wars fans crazy. Battle scenes are highly enjoyable if a little repetitive and although the graphics are vectored they move very smoothly and are adequately detailed.

Those who complete the missions quickly, (and you would have to be a Jedi to do so), will be pleased to know that X-Wing data disks are already in the shops featuring plenty of new and exciting missions as well as new vehicles and graphics.

US Gold/LucasArts

£45.99

Speed Racer Speed Racer takes its name and content from an extremely popular, you could even go so far as to call it classic, cartoon of the same name currently being shown on American television and watched by over 40 million viewers. Subtitled 'The Challenge of Racer X' the game is an attempt to bring the fun and cartoony antics to the PC. Starting up with a Anime/Manga style into the game itself sees you playing the role of one of two drivers and matching your skill and wits against many villains. These include the notorious Captain Terror and Snake Oiler who'll do anything to bump you off the roadside and dawdling in last place.

In total there are six different courses to race on, not nearly enough to give you full value and a great enough variety. The whole game resembles the original cartoon graphics wise and is very bright and colourful with some



humorous touches. The cars behave like Herbie at times as they squash up and change shape when in collisions with other vehicles. Admittedly Speed Racer isn't the best PC race game by a long shot, but, if nothing else, it is fun for a wee while.

Accolade

£39.99

Nick Faldo's Golf

Executive games are taking off with force and golf is at the forefront. Currently leading the pack are the excellent David Leadbetter's Golf from MicroProse and Links 386 from Access. So, how then can a relatively little company like Grand Slam hope to compete? Well they need a standalone game for a start.

Luckily Nick Faldo's is a real contender for the most playable golf simulation on the PC. Initially people may think that it doesn't look as good as the other two golf

Humans (The Jurassic Levels)

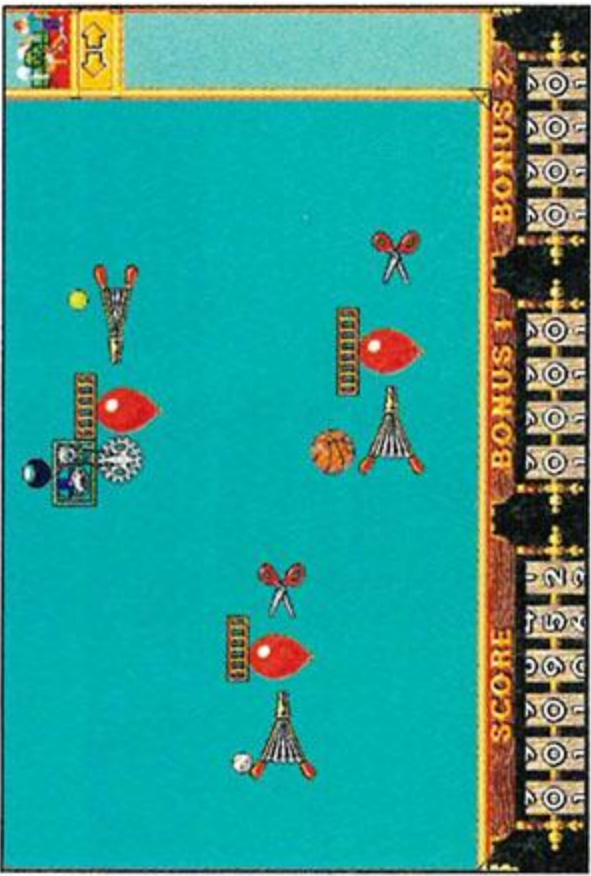
The Humans are back for a second dose of evolution in The Jurassic Levels (Dinomania yet again!). This offering comes from the Gametek stable as opposed to Mirage but the same team are behind it and the idea is the same.

If you've seen the first game then you'll have the idea already. If not, all you need to know is that you must help a tribe of Humans survive long enough to master the basic

Even more incredible machine If you went out and purchased the highly addictive and somewhat wacky Incredible Machine, then you'll be more than pleased to hear that Sierra On-Line have now released a data disk of the original game. Even More Incredible Machine includes a tonful of new puzzles, 73 if you're really counting, and also contains several brand-new features that will allow you to build and save your own machine puzzles.

Eleven new pieces have been added to the list as well as improved music and a few secret goodies for you to find out. The concept itself remains unchanged.

Basically it's a puzzle game, a bit of a cross between Sim City and Lemmings, if you needed to categorise it further.



The idea is to place objects in a certain order and location to successfully fulfil a given task which can range from dropping a basketball through a hoop or bursting balloons against scissors. You are allocated certain objects which you can use to complete your task and these are made up of pulleys, conveyor belts, fans and the like.

The Incredible Machine may not look much. It's very frustrating, yet at the same time highly addictive and is guaranteed to keep you hooked for months.

Sierra On-Line
£39.99

Privateer When Chris Roberts designs a game, everybody knows about it. His Wing Commander series has to be one of the most popular titles on the PC to date. Privateer is the next in that series. It all takes place at the time of the great space war between the Terrans and the Kilrathi. In Wing Commander you were a pilot for the



Terrans. In Privateer you are just an ordinary civilian trying to make a living through trading and fighting. It sounds a bit like Elite and in many ways it is. The theory behind the game is similar but the execution is nothing short of perfect. Privateer is a dream game and one that will cause a lot of people to waste many hours of their lives in front of the screen. Get yourself a high-end PC and enjoy computer games as they were meant to be played.

Electronic Arts
£49.99

Dracula First impressions of this game are that it would have something to do with the film of the same name. However, aside from several dead looking monsters moving towards you in what could only be described as a slightly threatening manner, and there seems to be no similarity whatsoever.

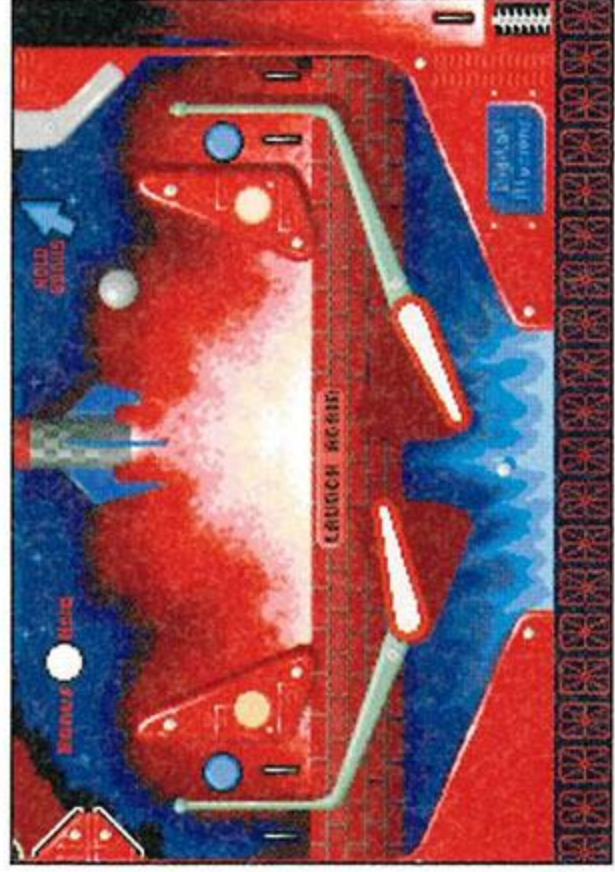
The first stage consists of a role-playing game set-up, ie. wandering around forests and dungeons and killing things that are already dead. The difference between this



and a normal RPG is that in this game things are pretty easy to kill. One silver bullet straight at the creature and off it goes up into the sky. The atmosphere of the game is good with bodies impaled on sharp points sticking out of the ground and some gruesome looking bad guys. The graphics are quite well presented with murals and RIP symbols adding to the detail, but they do become slightly repetitive with the grey walls getting on your nerves after a little while.

In a game based on a film, as this is, maybe a better method would be to stick more closely to the original plot. Psychosis have failed to come up with the goods. This is more a case of good graphics and atmosphere put into a game with no addictiveness or gameplay. Sadly we are seeing too many packages like this at the moment with software houses just rushing out products in a hope to make some more money. Psychosis can do much better.

Psychosis
£39.99



Pinball Dreams Pinball Dreams is the first pinball simulator on the PC and will probably be the ultimate. There are four tables on which to play, each with its own particular theme and hazards. The tables are absolutely huge in size and although the ball travels at lightning speed the incredibly smooth scrolling manages to keep up with the hectic pace every time. Sound effects are fairly average but gameplay more than makes up for any flaws to be found in the game. A superbly programmed simulator, Pinball Dreams offers the very best in pinball entertainment.

21st Century Entertainment
£39.99



arts of fire and the like and invent key things. We've all seen the concept before. When the original Humans was released on the Amiga, there was some legal trouble because of similarities between it and Lemmings.

Anyway it all blew over but some of the theories behind the game are the same, ie. you guide a bunch of gormless humans, one by one, around a series of varied screens. It's reasonably priced for a PC game and if you enjoy this sort of thinking-cum-puzzle type of game, then you can't go too far wrong with this.

Gametek
£29.99

8 - Ball Deluxe Pinball There is an influx of PC Pinball at the moment. 21st Century, Infogrames and Sierra are all at it. Supervision have latched on to this Bally Pinball game. Eight Ball Deluxe is a accurate representation of the real table and this version was recently used in the World Pinball Championships.

What there is is very good. It's well presented, colourful and noisy. Just like the real thing. The only downside is



there is only one table. This does provide an opportunity to get really good but causes a big variation problem. Just how long can you stay playing exactly the same thing without it becoming more than a little tedious? Another frustrating thing about the game is that it is very unforgiving. Fail to learn how to operate the nudges quickly and, before you know it, the ball is rolling down the side chutes before you've had the slightest chance to get properly started on the thing. Controlling the flippers is very similar to the other Pinball titles with the Shift keys operating them. They are responsive too.

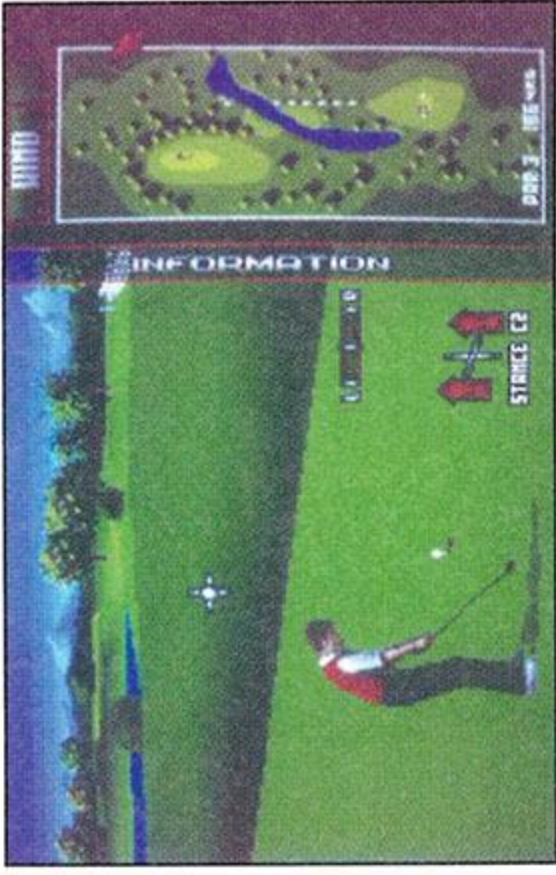
Faults and plus points aside, the table is good fun. It's well presented, colourful and noisy. Exactly what you need in fact and the movement is more realistic than its main contender - Pinball Dreams.

Something else worth mentioning is the excellent manual that explains all the features in detail and gives a lot of background information. It may not all be of use but it does show a lot of effort has been put into the package as a whole.

Supervision
£35.99

packages since there are no digitised landscapes. Just because everything is drawn through doesn't mean that it lacks any impact. Graphics are done wonderfully with some of the nicest shading yet seen.

Until now there has only really been one method of controlling golfers that has been used to any great lengths. That is the circular graph with the line moving around the outside. Grandslam have gone for a different approach and, surprisingly, it does seem to work. It involves double clicking the mouse on a certain position to get hook or swing (or even fade and draw if you know



what you're talking about!). As with Links you only get the one course to start off with but more Championship ones are on the horizon. There are several different players to challenge, including the great supremo Nick himself. Only when you have beaten him will you be ready for a new course.

Grandslam
£34.99

Tactical Operations - Strike Commander You can't move for Chris Roberts' games at the moment. This is only a mission disk for his popular Strike Commander but Tactical Operations is one of those products that will sell and sell, while at the same time, cleverly increasing the shelf life of the original product.

Twenty one news missions are included for your £20 as well as a nice new plane - the F22 Lightning II which has a slightly different weapons payload than that which players are presently used to. The other major change that has been made is that the actual flying has been made more realistic. As the manual says, this also makes it more



difficult but apparently provides a better approximation of flying a modern F-16 in a combat situation.

There are new cinematic sequences but they do take up another seven meg on your hard drive making a total, if you have the speech installed, of nearly 50 megs of space. Playing Strike Commander can be an expensive business. If you're looking for a batch of new missions then your prayers may well be answered with this little addition. Take the Wildcats over the skies of Turkey for a different kind of adventure.

Electronic Arts
£19.99

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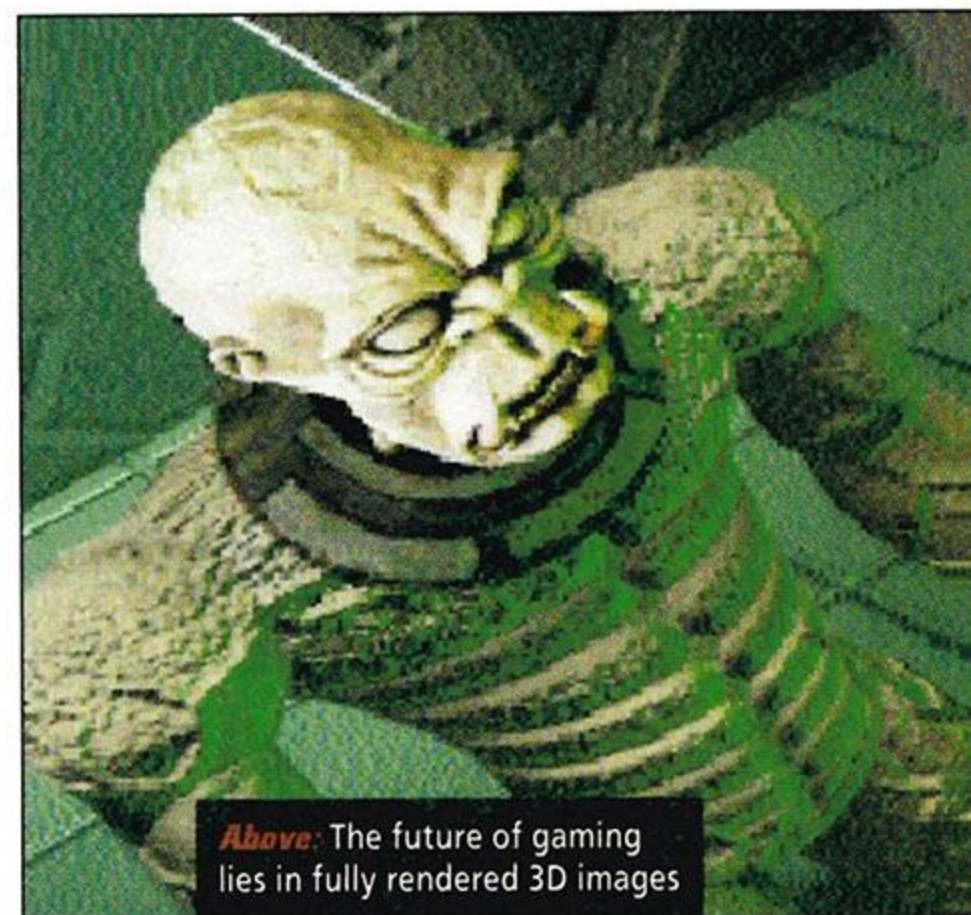
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Thunderbirds for the nineties – this is how development company D.I.D. tag **INFERNO**, their

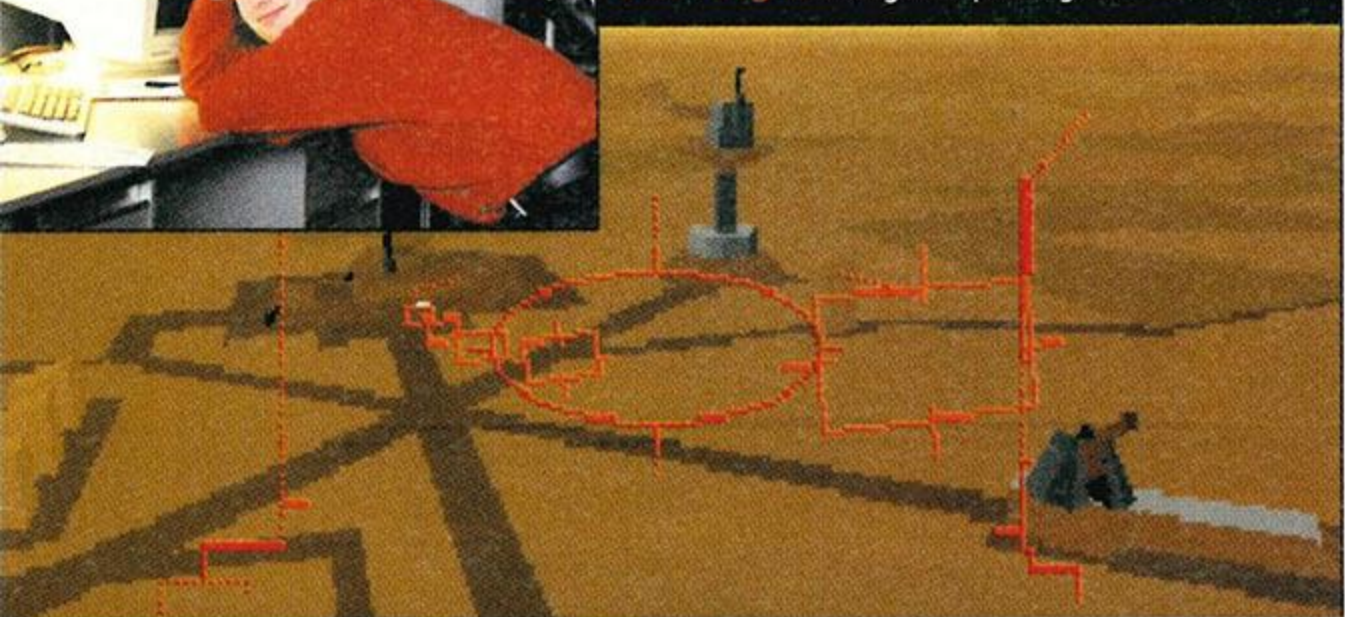


D.I.D. YOU KNOW

D i g i t a l I m a g e



Left: Jim Jennett, one of D.I.D.'s team
Below Left: Martin Kenwright, MD of D.I.D.
Below Right: The game package to look out for



INFERNO

forthcoming game on the brink of re-sculpturing the look and feel of future space simulations



'WE'VE NOT TRIED TO EMULAT

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a story telling seeping through the centuries has become more grandiose, more colourful and more fantasy orientated, so too have space combats become increasingly sophisticated. Turn your interest now to a tale involving both the dark and light sides of an entire solar system, a tale of heroics and tragedy, a tale that's revolutionary in its makeup and evolutionary in its approach. Welcome to Inferno – The Odyssey Continues. And welcome to Runcorn.

Tucked away just a stone's throw from the river Mersey and swathed with exorbitantly expensive stereo equipment lies the offices of D.I.D. (Digital Image Design), a development company that's experienced unparalleled growth over the last two years.

NOW

Design

The 18 or so developers, programmers and graphic artists over there remain cosily wrapped in the reassurance that their visionary computer game indulgences will become the bench-mark by which future games will be judged.

Inferno, to be provisionally launched at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas in January is, in the loosest sense of the word, the sequel to Epic. A game that lived up to its title in production yet failed to excite the taste buds on delivery.

A lot of water has gone under the bridge since then. Maybe Epic's greatest achievement yet will be that of harbinger to Inferno.

The story itself takes place 90 years after Epic left off. You are invited to do battle anywhere through an entire solar system consisting of seven planets, three moons, both alien and human installations and interplanetary space zones.

Improvements on Epic are blatantly obvious, the first

of which is the size of the game itself. 'In Inferno the player will have the freedom to travel to whichever planet he desires,' explains Paul Hollywood, the man responsible for the 3D effects. 'We wanted to make it very action orientated and a racey affair with you bombing down the corridors inside the installations. What we're now aiming to achieve is a bobsleigh effect. When you head into a wall you'll smooth around it rather than stopping dead.'

'In the corridor sequences inside the installations it would be impossible to include all the clichéd angles from which you can view the exterior of your space ship so we're going to be setting up camera angles instead.'

The game will start off small in so far as you will be on a training mission during the course of which rexons – first introduced in Epic – and scoutships will inevitably be encountered.

The whole experience will then gradually expand to immerse the player into a total spaceworld,

encompassing 150 missions and featuring space battles with more than 300 individually controlled craft.

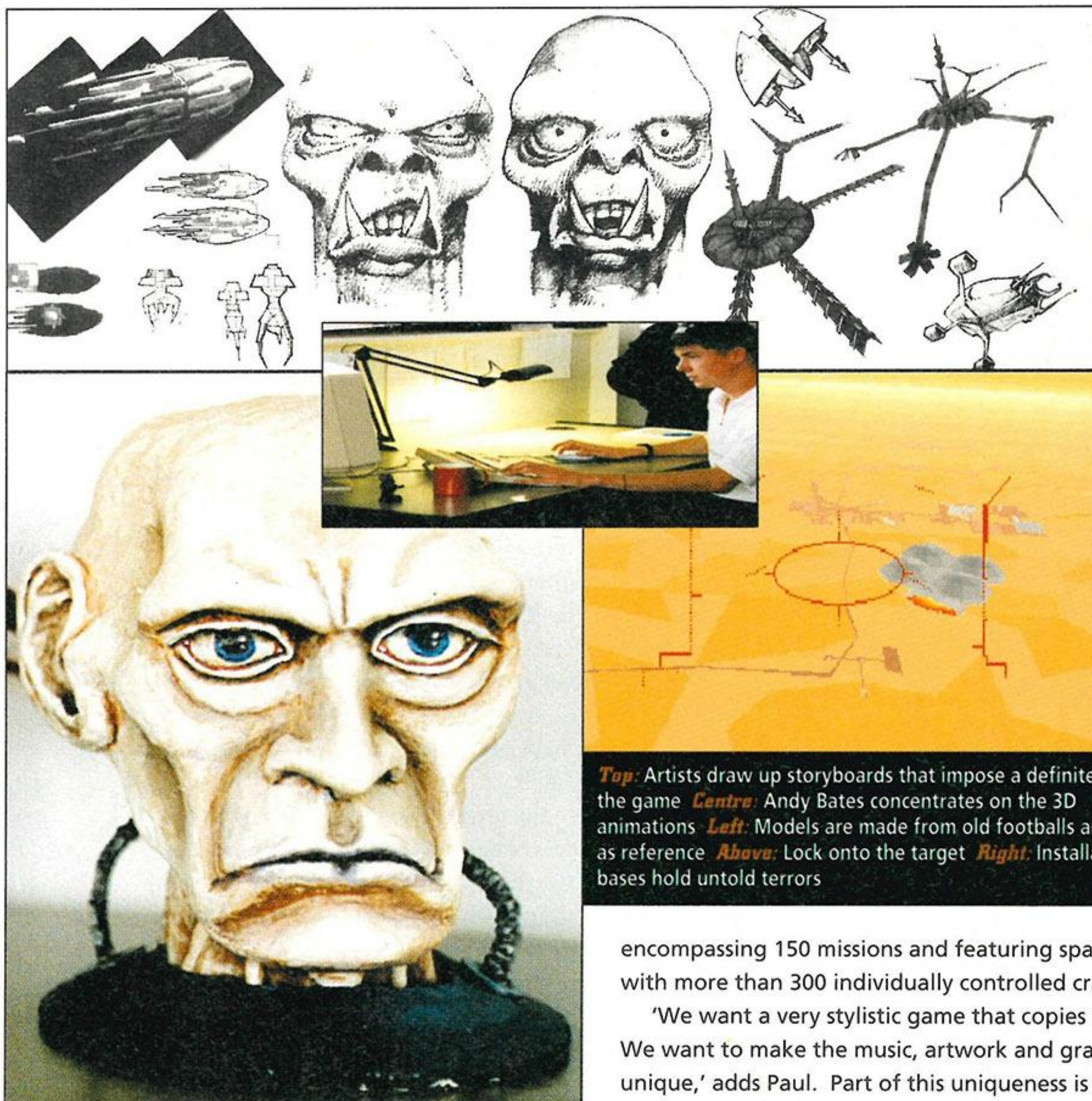
'We want a very stylistic game that copies no other. We want to make the music, artwork and graphics unique,' adds Paul. Part of this uniqueness is derived from the mad colour scheme, while you will find that each planet has its own theme.

The home planet, for example, is green and lush like the earth, whereas when you splash under the surface to the water world you're enveloped in a cyan blue and confronted with fish-like enemies.

Inferno has been in development for over a year now. That's ten man years in total. Initially one person has the germ of an idea and then everyone gets together for a brainstorming session and elaborates from the core outwards.

Picture boards have also been created to develop a feel and a whole culture to the game. Every shape of every ship and enemy has a similar feel to make it fit into the ensemble. It is then a case of putting the manuscript into motion.

The voluptuousness of high complexity 3D environments throughout the game really do heighten its appeal. Just as the auspicious nature of 3D is in the throws of wowing the gaming world, never ▶



Top: Artists draw up storyboards that impose a definite feel to the game **Centre:** Andy Bates concentrates on the 3D animations **Left:** Models are made from old footballs and used as reference **Above:** Lock onto the target **Right:** Installation bases hold untold terrors

E ANY OTHER FLIGHT SIM. IMITATION AS OPPOSED ▶

D.I.D. YOU KNOW

Digital Image Design

► before have you really been able to feel a game like you can now.

D.I.D. have one of the best 3D engines around that's been amended and developed over the last three years, and five or six graphic artists have been doing the 3D work for Inferno for over six months.

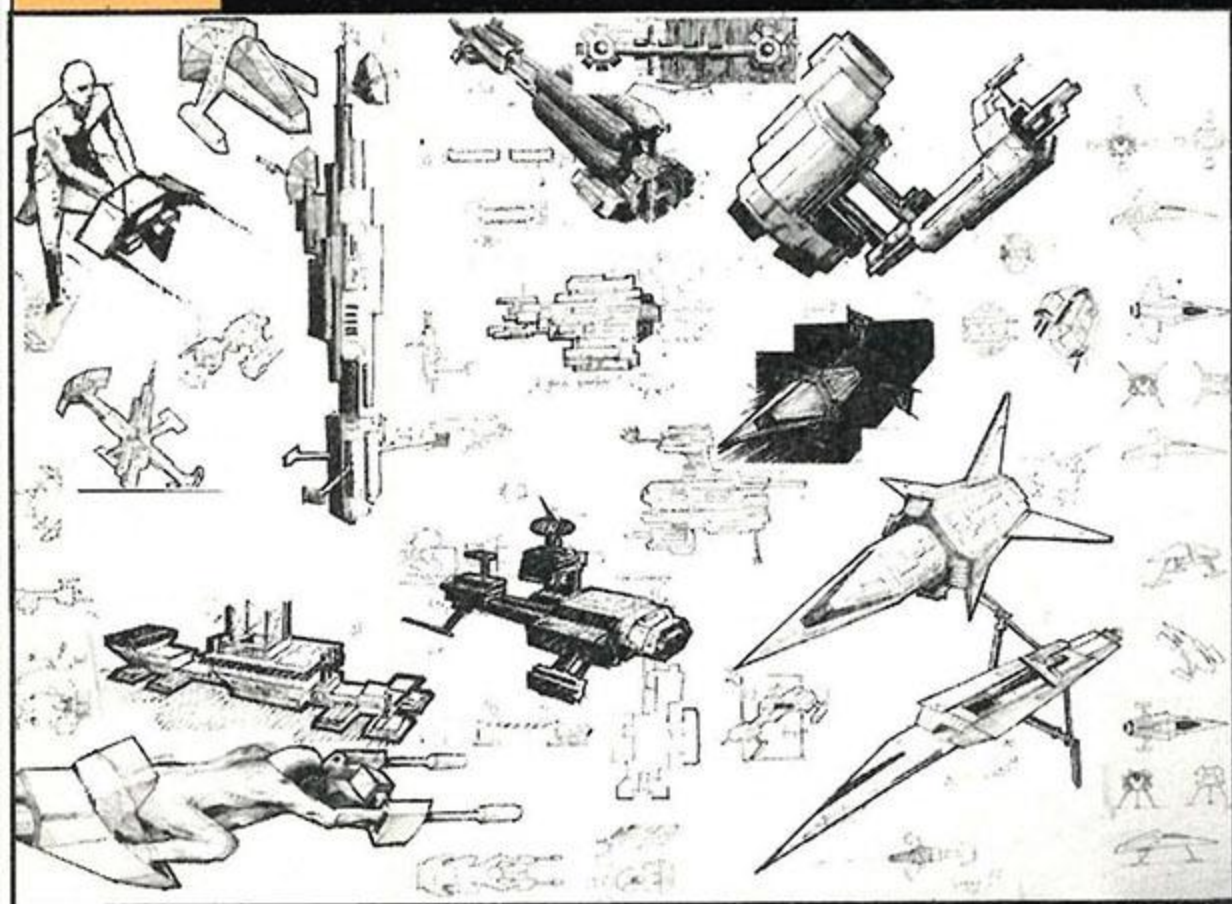
The cinematic style takes so long and costs so much money that publishers ultimately question its validity, but this really is the way forward to establish a true virtual reality type effect.

Incidentally, the two million dollar deal to develop games exclusively for Ocean was cemented at the last ECTS (European Consumer Trade Show).

As one of the biggest independent companies DID want to make a name for themselves and so it's great to have this affiliation. It all began with a conversation between DID's MD, Martin Kenwright and Dave Ward, head honcho at Ocean in EuroDisney the day after an award ceremony in which Ocean took a stuffing.

'We're really huge in France,' says Martin – appropriate for a man whose frame towers six foot five in socks and who drives around in a Chemara TVR complete with a Jean Paul Gautier knob for opening the doors. Sign of the success he's already enjoying to be sure, but not at all in keeping, or so you would have thought, with the registration L SLOW. 'Anyway I said I

Below: The variety of weapons for use were initially crafted onto huge reference cards before being taken one step further



could do games twice as good as Ocean were churning out. An urgent fax was waiting when I returned to Britain.'

New innovation is a major concern within the company. One such creative touch is the game manual which

will come in the form of a comic designed by Sean Philips, graphic artist on Judge Dredd comics.

'It's more of a graphic illustration to retain the style of the game,' says Martin. 'It's really absorbing and done in a very informal kind of way while still incorporating all the technical data and everything you will need to know to get playing straightaway.'

The soundtrack too has become a thing unto itself, sending atmospheric frissons through the game. Initially DID were intent on pursuing successful main stream bands such as The KLF or The Orb to create a medley of golden chords but, when it appeared that this just wasn't going to happen Barry Leitch, Ocean's main music man, suggested Alien Sex Fiend.

The group undertook a thorough reconnaissance of the game from storyboard stage right through to enemy characterisations and then spent five or six weeks composing.

Once the soundtrack's been jazzed up for a more techno flavour they hope to release it as a record independent of the game.

Time constraints have lead the team to work around the clock as Inferno draws tantalisingly close to completion. The spit has been added, there's just the polish left now.

And then there's always the self satisfaction of knowing when something's come good, even more so in the expeditiously evolving world of the flight sim cum arcade game.

Martin Kenwright remains steadfast that Inferno will set new standards. 'Years ago we did Falcon, Flight of the Intruder and F-29. We're not newcomers in this field. We've not needed to copy other games.'

These early wanderings have provided the bread and butter for glorious new approaches, the likes of which gamers are enjoying today.

And with that Martin must finish. He's a busy man, what with TV interviews, promotional videos and jaunts to far flung beaches where, with only his imagination for company, he can dream up new scripts for ever more sophisticated games.

SHARON GREAVES



Above: The shadow of your craft hovers at the entrance **Left:** Just one of a number of models decorating the Runcorn offices **Below:** The animation sequences are tested again and again **Bottom:** Enter a base and experience a bob sleigh claustrophobic flight



Below: Nick and Mrs Fiend, the people behind Stuff The Turkey, Smells Like and I'm Doing Time in a Maximum Security Twilight Home. Hmm



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CREATIVE CRUISING

Creativity alone is futile unless annexed to some practical adeptness. All too often gamers bemoan the jadedness of *Dungeon Master* imitations and the like, yet are unable to put their own ideas into practice and attempt to concoct the right ingredients to make a masterpiece.

'But *Klik 'n' Play* is something with which all creative people can express themselves,'

responds François Lionet, project designer on Europress Software's *Klik 'n' Play* game-creation package, due for release next spring. 'This is the first creator on Windows, the first modern concept of object orientation,' he adds.

By the simple use of Windows-like drop down menus and a point and click mechanism, players are openly invited to stretch the limits of

Just imagine a gamesplaying Utopia which may be only a *Klik 'n' Play* away

their imagination.

As well as the program itself, the complete kit will incorporate music, sound samples and a huge databank of graphics – there are up to 20 ready made examples.

'We've taken two separate approaches,' explains François. 'The first is the simple one in which the user can select pre-made objects from the program, take them, put them on the background, then just klik 'n' play. The alternative approach involves a deeper interface. The program can be edited and people will be able to scan in their own photographs, change peoples' faces, even put them in strange environments and give them new movements.'

Users can mingle and match real pictures with roguish sketches from the mind to produce an explosive cocktail.

François explains further, 'There will be an infinite number of objects and levels. The only limitation is that of speed. With at least 20 sprites on screen, you can make

gameplay as busy as you really want to.'

François is the man who inspired *AMOS* – The Creator on the Amiga, a beginner's program for Amiga enthusiasts who wanted to do their own programming.

Initially the idea behind *Klik 'n' Play* was to design an *AMOS* for the PC but this would prove to be impossible due to time constraints.

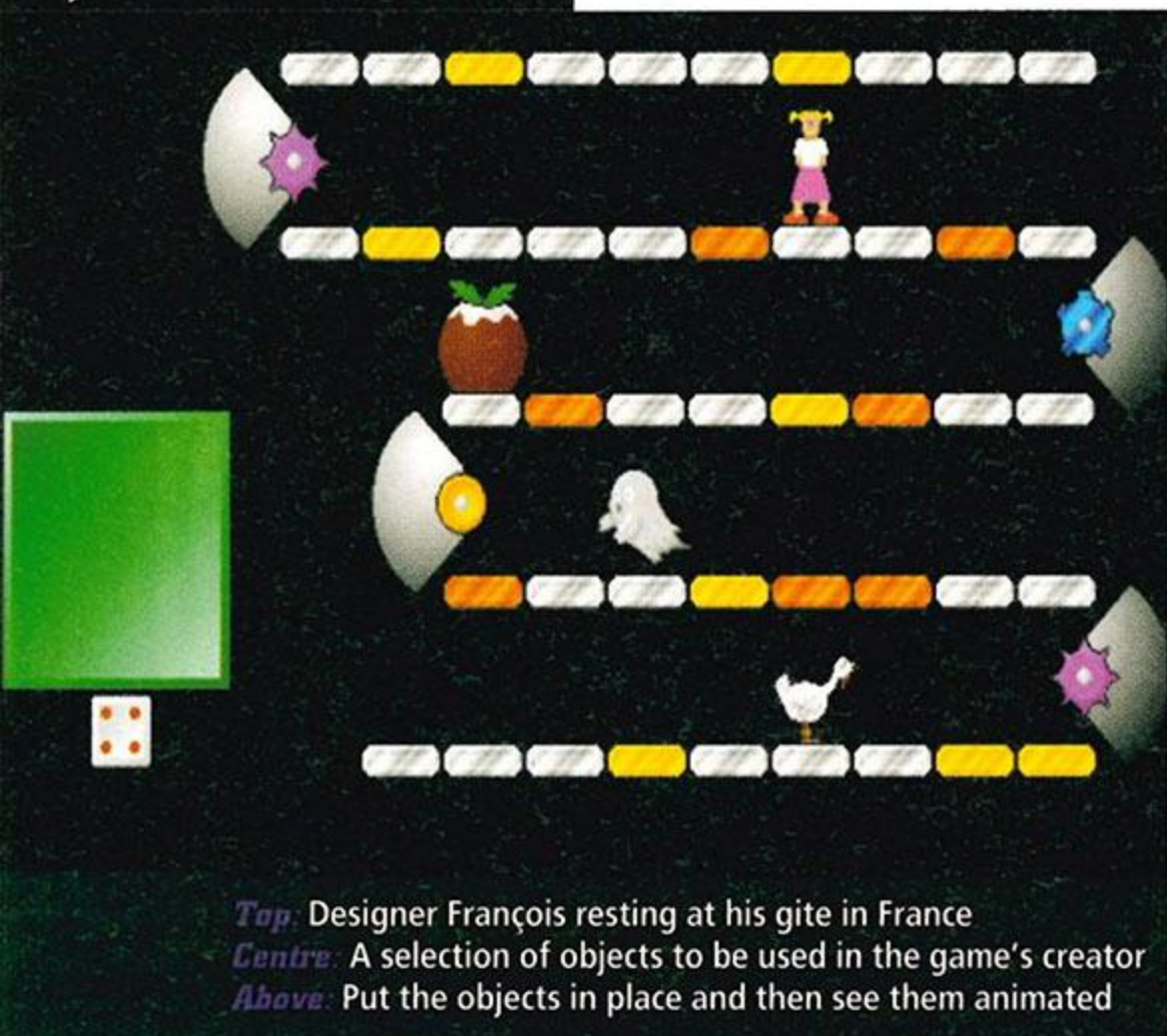
Something simpler was needed and when a game creator of any kind just popped up out of nowhere, it was greeted as a great idea and something that was seriously lacking for the PC market.

The beauty of the whole caboodle is that adventures, puzzle games, even educational projects can be manufactured and saved onto disk or customised as screen savers.

SHARON GREAVES



Top: Scan in everyday images and then transfer them to the gaming screen **Top right:** Expand your imagination and put your mind to the invention of all sorts of weird and wonderful creatures. The program will cater for all tastes **Above:** And then it's on to the creation of suitable landscapes



Top: Designer François resting at his gite in France **Centre:** A selection of objects to be used in the game's creator **Above:** Put the objects in place and then see them animated



Top: François Lionet and co-worker taking a break **Centre:** Designing *AMOS* was no easy task. A bit of frivolity is called for



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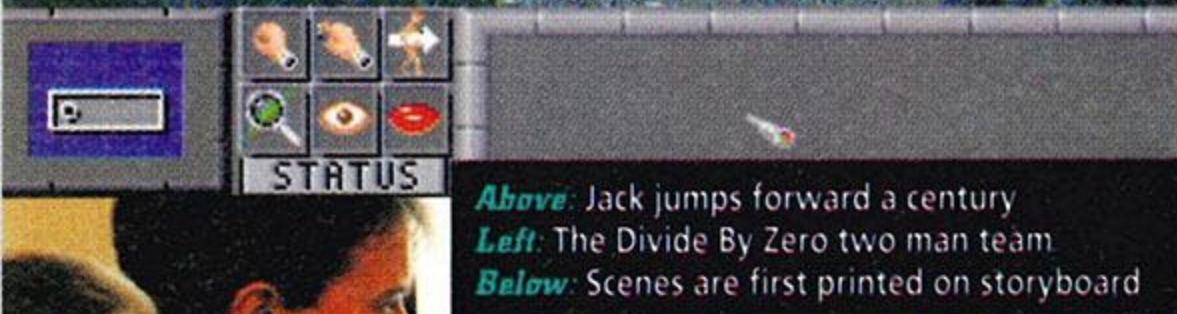
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JUGGLING

THE RIGHT E



Left: Jack T Ladd, the hero of the piece and lovingly sketched on storyboards before being dragged into the game proper



Above: Jack jumps forward a century
Left: The Divide By Zero two man team
Below: Scenes are first printed on storyboard



Drawing back the curtains on their near finished game, Divide by Zero lay claims that it'll be the most theatrical adventure experience yet. Are they guilty of gross exaggeration, or just **INNOCENT Until Caught...**

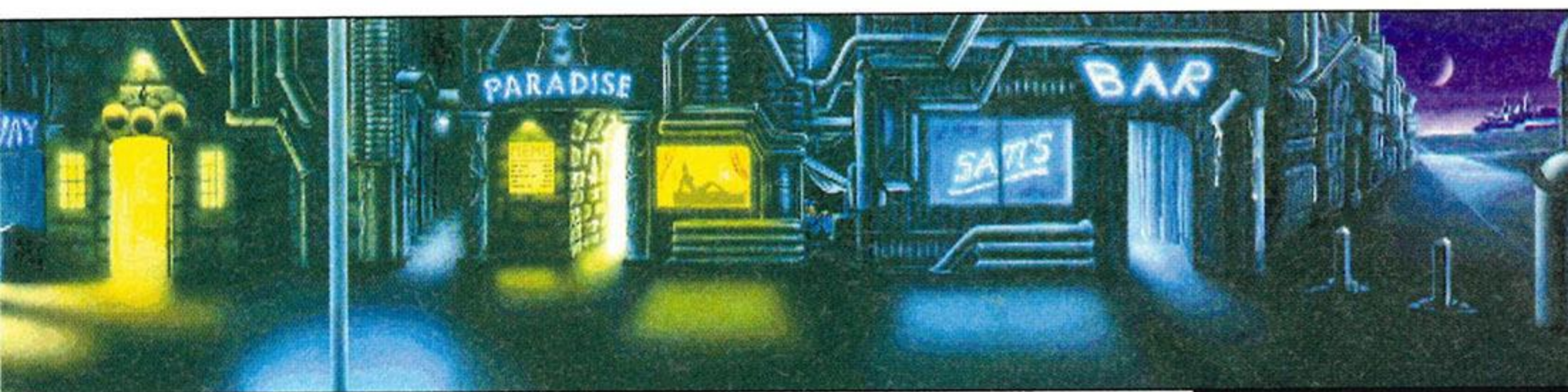
Mention the success and immense playability of LucasArts games to the two man partnership known as Divide by Zero and you'll get a severe reprimand. Remind them of the fact that LucasArts (Monkey Island, Indiana Jones, Day of the Tentacle) are the market leaders in the graphic adventure field and their bottom lips will start to curl.

Malcontent when surveying the state of the graphic adventure games niche and fiercely critical of the 'cutting corners' approach of some software programmers, Andy Blazdell lays it on the line. 'We like to think British programmers are the best in the world. The real creative technically good stuff comes from here.'

Simon Lipowicz, the other 50 per cent of the Divide by Zero equation puts in his fourpenneth, 'The system we've designed is extremely flexible so that we can not just emulate but better anything that is now out on the market.'

'We make sure we can do everything that LucasArts can do. And then some. If the truth be known, we've gone out of our way to do things the hardest way technically.' Innocent, the game they've





Above: Meet a rich assortment of space age people in houses of ill repute **Right:** Expanding landscapes replace the sinister streets when night falls



QUATION

'IT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A HANNA ▶

been beaver away on for the last 18 months is a graphic adventure point and click type affair, a first for publishers Psygnosis as regards this genre.

The guys were in the process of designing a system for Mirrorsoft that enables you to write any sort of cause and effect game, such as point and click, from a first person perspective. This was before Robert Maxwell's ungainly bellyflop though, after which even the most well hatched plots went to seed.

Fortunately Psygnosis came to the rescue. They specifically desired a theatre viewpoint and so the system was modified accordingly. Eighteen months later and Divide By Zero have a game reminiscent of the best theatrical plays but with total player involvement. The engine they've polished to perfection is the core of all future projects. Now that all the backbone work is finished

it can be used over and over again and, because of its flexibility, can be tweaked, making each subsequent game substantially different.

The bottom line to all this is that infinitely more time can be spent on future storylines and gameplay over and above technical difficulties.

As for Innocent this is the basic storyline. You play a Harrison Ford lookalike by the hugely original name of Jack T Ladd. The problems of today have been bundled together and dumped in a new galaxy somewhere in the future, where you now

find yourself. The dictator is the all knowing, all powerful taxman. The modern day equivalent to Darth Vader, except this one isn't going to challenge you to a duel. The enemy has worked out everything Jack has ever stolen in his entire life, right from his first Cornetto through to the last business lunch he fiddled. And he has only 28 days to pay this huge bill.

Like any other mere mortal in his shoes he decides a tippie or two of the hard stuff would sooth his furrowed brow somewhat, and so heads off for the nearest bar.

There he gets in with the wrong crowd, untoward events begin to stack up and the story flows thereon. Interestingly enough Jack is your not so typical anti-hero, a thief who is at ease swiping things from the street and frequenting shady places.

The woman he falls in love with, the dictator's daughter, is again, paradoxically, your not so typical anti-woman in computer game role either. Maybe a sign of changing times perhaps..?

Behind this point and click based adventure and more than just cardboard cut out characterisation is a film-like mentality. 'What we're really trying to do,' says Andy, 'is emulate a film.' 'LucasArts - again that scornful tone - have the habit of taking the mickey out of their own game and the fact that it's on computer.'

'Compare it to an instance when you're watching a film and the character turns round and addresses the camera out of context. The spell is broken. No longer do you live that film.'

The film Last Action Hero took this method to extremes by trying to deliver a film within a film, and by the responses it's mustered it goes to show that this intrusion doesn't work.

Andy's on a roll now, 'The plot is quite complex because of the character interaction. I read several books on how to write screenplays when starting to script

Innocent and noticed how much they follow a very formulaic train of thought.

'You have the hero, the nemesis, the romantic interest, the secondary character, and then they've all got primary and secondary motivations.

'In terms of technically being like a movie, we are in Innocent. We've even opted for a bigger screen area to hold this film like immersion.'

They like to believe in this other world that the player is entering. Escapism is fundamental. But with this escapism must be realism. This means realism of movement and realism of dialogue. No longer are characters who walk in right angles and do left to right moonwalking slides satisfactory. Neither are doors that open and close in just one frame.

'We've noticed that in a lot of the other systems programmers have taken the easy way out by concentrating on the storyline and forgetting the fact that they're using state-of-the-art hardware. The PC is a ▶

Below: A variety of locations need to be explored to uncover clues to aid progress



Below: When talking to characters the screen zooms in to focus your attention. Click on any word to carry the conversation further



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JUGGLING

THE RIGHT EQUATION

► powerful machine and is not used to its full potential.

'Nobody else bothers to let the actors walk in eight directions. Usually they use mirror images when a character changes direction. Look closely and you'll notice that his bag or whatever he's carrying/wearing will magically change sides.

'In Innocent the characters have both left and right sides and we've deliberately gone for a lot of detail.'

Although the average gamesplayer probably won't notice such tiny things unless they're pointed out, they will



Above: A user friendly interface smoothes gameplay along

Top right: Andy Blazdell and Simon Lipowicz putting the finishing touches to their game

Below Right: The heroine, who also happens to be the enemy's cherished daughter (such is life)

► BARBERA CARTOON AND BEAUTY AND THE BEAST'

more than likely admire the realism and smoothness of the graphics themselves.

It remains to be seen whether gameplay itself can match and maintain this same level of detail and dedication, but maybe that's jumping much too far ahead at this stage.

'We could have got away with a lot of stuff,' explains Andy. 'Take for example a door opening. We never do a simple open and shut. We open and shut it in ten or 12 frames so you can actually see the action.

'It's the difference between a Hanna Barbera cartoon and Beauty and the Beast. For example, Scooby Doo, The Flintstones and The Jetsons all tell a story but are very cheap on animation, using the same frames over and over again rather than new ones.

'We've gone for a Beauty and the Beast style by including all the animations in all the right frames rather than one frame action. We're been very strict on our artists, stipulating that every frame must be in there.'

Not only has a lot of thought gone into the theatrical style of the game but also in the control interface which, at the end of the day, has to be user friendly enough to allow the player to get utterly and totally involved. In this case you may well be pleased to notice a cross between the

Sierra style interface and the LucasArts method of approach. The control design incorporates a total of six different modes: move mode, look, use, pick up/drop, talk and scan.

The special dialogue mode has been done on a separate screen to allow for greater scope. You can often get fed up being limited to the average four responses, three of which are obvious jokes. Therefore the duo have stretched this idea as far as it can go, trying to move away from standard computer game conversation and more into the way people think and talk and the connections that spring up in real life.

During the course of a dialogue, certain words will become highlighted if you pass the cursor over them. Click on this word and it opens up the conversation even further. Using a similar train of thought, everything you see on the screen can be interacted with. Move over an object/thing and it will illicit a response rather than staying stagnant.

Andy explains, 'You should be able to do something with everything that is highlighted on the screen. There should always be a response. If you can detect something, be it a bookcase or a notepad but not be able to use it or glean some sort of response from it, then it's not realistic enough and you're reminded that you're in a computer game rather than involved in an interactive experience.'

Again, LucasArts come in for some serious chafing on this subject. Those of you who have played Day of the Tentacle need only think of the bowling ball used to knock down the tentacles. Why should you be able to pick up every other item in the room, bar this ball, until the very end of the game? OK, it makes for a fun challenge but it isn't the most logical of tactics.

Anyway, departing from the fun factor and silliness beloved by LucasArts (too infantile for Divide By Zero who

prefer a more adult humour, although not so adult as the smut of Leisure Suit Larry), the guys are hoping to further embed the realism in Innocent in a number of ways.

Take for example the usual array of objects that can be picked up in adventure games. You won't find a sausage lying in the middle of the road for no apparent reason but you would find an oil can by the side of a group of bikers. Objects won't be just objects but will be placed in their correct context.

Puzzles too aren't as illogical as some games you could care to mention. The duo have made sure that there will always be a clue to a potential sticky situation provided you work hard enough. If you explore thoroughly and interact properly then in no way should you find that you get absolutely stuck.

Of course the puzzles will become more involved as the storyline advances but by then players should be more in tune with the way the programmers think.

Market pressures nowadays make so many good products go to waste. But Divide By Zero is one development company that definitely wants a say in the marketing of their product.

They see themselves as more of a burgeoning film company rather than a software development team, and that's how they hope to continue, with a head on challenge to all those huge American companies that eat up such a huge slice of the European games market. Indeed, Psygnosis are so confident in Innocent that they have already commissioned a sequel.

SHARON GREAVES



Below: Early on in the adventure a gang of ruffians give vital clues. Remember to pick up anything and everything



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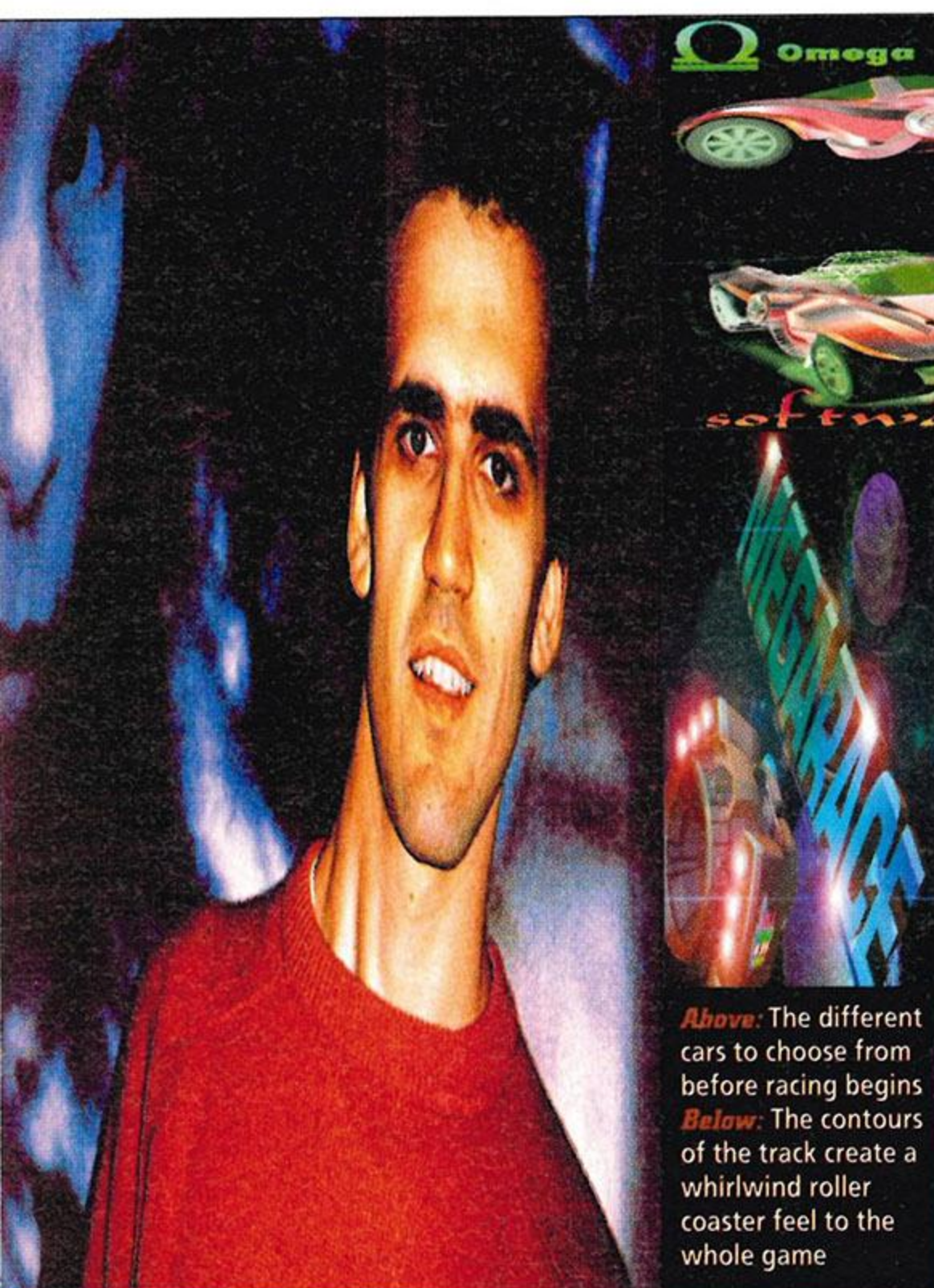


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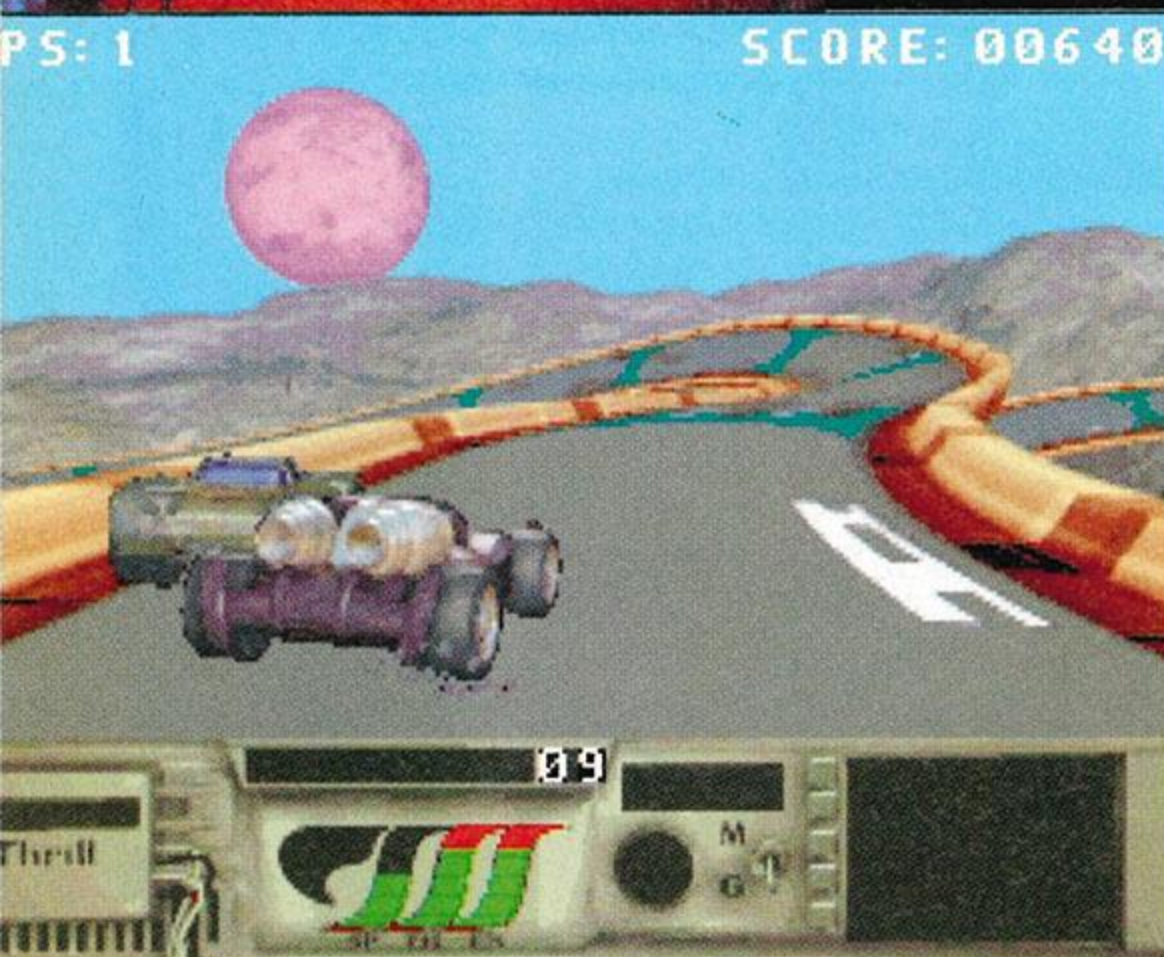
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Above: The different cars to choose from before racing begins
Below: The contours of the track create a whirlwind roller coaster feel to the whole game



Avant-garde in both approach and conception. This is the belief that forms the cornerstone of innovative French development team Cryo's efforts as *MegaRace* zooms into view

'THANKS TO CD

In leaps and bounds is how you would best describe the progression of computer technology. And duly acknowledged it is too. However, little fuss is made of the fact that this technology can also be exploited, albeit to a lesser extent, in the fast expanding and chameleon like domain of computer games.

'But thanks to CD, we have the means to recreate a legend, like Pole Position in its time,' explains Philippe Ulrich, head designer at Cryo Interactive Entertainment based in France and now putting the finishing touches to his company's latest creation, MegaRace.

'With MegaRace our greatest ambition is to exploit this technological innovation. The progress of synthesising images on the PC allows us to make that dream become a reality. MegaRace will be the first driving game to be rendered in synthetic images.'

A great achievement in itself but add to that 3D morphing sequences and 'television look' images and, who can tell, it may yet outpique the likes of Formula One Grand Prix and Indianapolis, top of the current list of Philippe's favourite games.

When questioned on the future of video game entertainment Philippe is quick to point out that Cryo's principal investment lies in CD-Rom.

'It's vital to anticipate what lies in the future and start to master this new media in its fledgling stages,'



THE TRAIL

WE HAVE THE MEANS TO RECREATE A LEGEND'

he adds. 'In the past, French developers have become more than a little frustrated when it comes down to development on cartridge based products simply because the market has been dictated by the big names of Sega and Nintendo and thus severely restrictive.'

On the PC and with regard to CD-Rom, such impositions just don't enter into the equation. Apart from MegaRace, other projects currently nearing boiling point at Cryo Head Quarters are KGB, an adventure game on the PC, Amiga and CD-Rom and which stars Donald Sutherland, and also Dune on the CD.

This will be a reworking of the adventure/strategy game but now with the added extras of backgrounds generated by 3D Studio and fully lipsynch voice over of the characters.

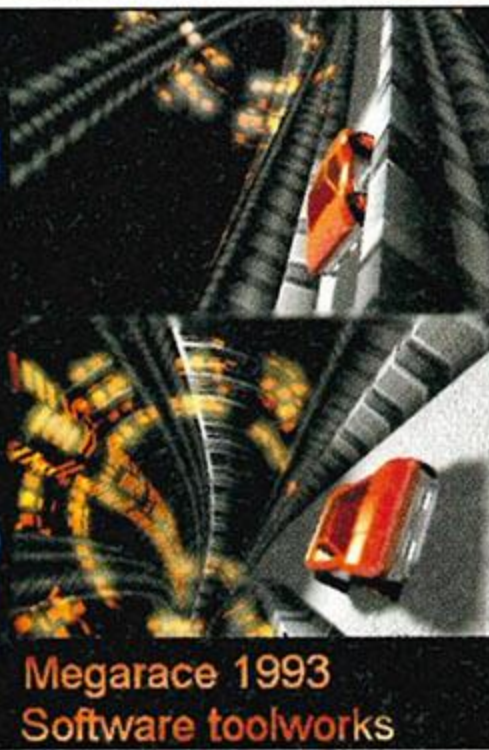
Not to be compartmentalised, Cryo have a finger in every pie of the rapidly expanding interactive market at the moment. The team itself resembles a big family. Employees aren't faced with any kind of restrictions and enforcements. They aren't required to clock in at work five days a week, eight hours a day.

Some prefer to work from home, others may arrive late and then work into the night. As long as the work is completed in time and retains a high standard, then Philippe foresees no immediate problems. From the Mega CD to the Super Nintendo and through to 3DO, the company's really cranking up the gears.

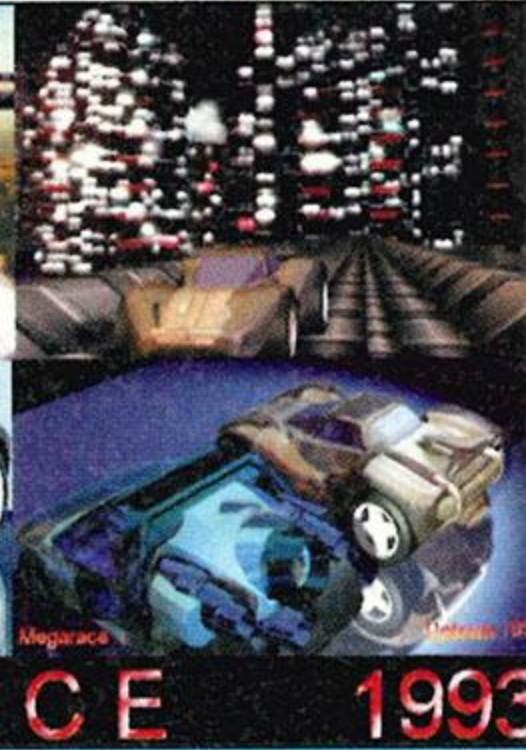
And talking of gears,

MegaRace, due for release by Mindscape early in the new year on CD and floppy, won't lend itself the stigma of being 'just' a car racing game. Oh no, this is all about dare devilry, over-the-topery and some quite shameless flirtation with danger.

Cryo Uptown



Megarace 1993
Software toolworks



MEGARACE 1993

Set somewhere the future, a well-known TV channel organises a driving contest in which the player, not content with merely outsmarting the pitfalls of circuit and adversaries, must demonstrate great recklessness in order to gain maximum points. The more spectacular his driving, the greater the rewards he reaps.

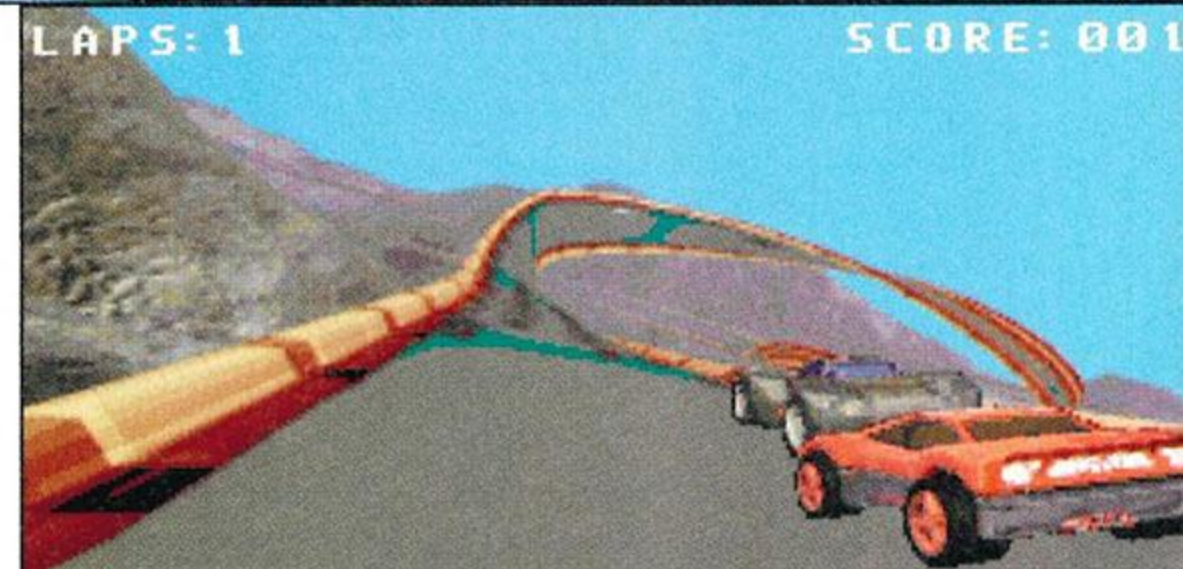
It is being primarily marketed as an arcade game. Forget about it being just a question of purring along at a steady 50mph. Forget about admiring the pretty roadside views. From the moment that foot touches the metal on the pedal, an all consuming wealth of action, much of which is to be stimulated by yourself playing the archetypal hooligan, is meant to be the order of the day.

As well as including 3D morphing sequences, 'television look' images have also been conceived thanks to a new concept called VideoSampling. This allows for the inclusion of a real actor amid the glossiness of the synthetic images.

But even when omitting the 3D cinematic cut scenes, MegaRace will contain more than 30 minutes of video in full 3D while all the graphics – the circuit, its environments – have been rendered by means of synthetic animated images.

To achieve this the designers have had to make models of all the layouts of the various routes, whether that be loop the loop sections or tunnels. Then they simulated the actual movement of how the journey would look through a wide camera angle and transferred this onto the screen.

The result will be a fluid feel of movement as the player experiences all the queasiness and ups and downs which are normally annexed to a roller coaster ride.



Above: A futuristic race track
Left: Taking a break in the french offices
Below: The players set out on a drive into the sunset of the future

On the concept of 3D, Philippe Ulrich has only one thing to say: 'It's the future. Soon virtual reality will be within everyone's reach and those who have gambled on 3D will be the ones who walk off with the big prizes.' Not unlike games designers worldwide, quality is his ultimate goal, and if part of this quality derives from developing games that are rendered entirely using synthetic images, then so be it. MegaRace may well be only the beginning...

SHARON GREAVES

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W - REETINGS MY FRIENDS, AND WELCOME TO
MY SURGERY FOR WHAT I HOPE WILL BE
THE START OF A LONG, NOT TO MENTION
MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RELATIONSHIP...

Before we begin, let me introduce myself. I am a doctor and have been so for more years than I care to remember. I would tell you my real name, but I fear that it would be unpronounceable to you and if you were to attempt it, you could be at risk of doing yourself some serious damage. So let's just leave it at Doctor for the time being shall we? Helps to maintain an element of mystery don't you think?

Right then, you may wonder why a column written by a person such as myself is found within the pages of a publication such as this. Well, if you will just bear with me a moment I will explain. I am no ordinary doctor, although don't get me wrong, I do practise within the confines of medicine as you and I know it. I also indulge myself in what you could call an interesting little sideline, namely games of the PC variety, and that basically is what I am doing here.

Each month I aim to provide a special help line

for PC gamers on any game under the sun, be it adventure, RPG, flight sim or arcade. If you have a problem, you can guarantee that the answer will be found within these pages. Unfortunately, although I have many talents, psychic I am not, so unless you can be bothered to put quill to parchment your pleas will go unanswered, not to mention unheard!

Before you get the wrong impression about me, let me make it clear that I am not doing any of this out of the goodness of my heart. Believe me, I can think of a thousand things I would rather be doing with my time. Suffice to say, the rewards are bountiful. Europress wanted the best for this PC Action thing and were prepared to go to any lengths to get it. That is just what they have got and I say that with absolutely no doubt in my mind (I don't see the point of being modest about such things).

Anyway, enough about me for the time being.

No doubt, as time goes by we will discover more about each other, and only time will tell whether this relationship will be a fruitful one or not. I for one certainly hope it will be.

So what's good on the PC front at the moment? Although it's been

around for a while now, the best game really must be X-Wing. I know that due to the exceptionally high difficulty level many of you are struggling with this one and I am expecting a veritable tidal wave of questions over the coming months on this particular classic. Have no fear, I am capable of overcoming any difficulties you may have, so don't be shy. There really is no point in suffering in silence when salvation is so easily at hand.

While I'm on the subject of this little gem, I may as well give you a few general pointers to make things a little easier. I know it is a pain and to be honest a touch on the tedious side, but it really is worth working your way through the training sequences before moving on to the actual missions themselves. I can guarantee that once you have achieved success through all of the training levels, especially the vicious level four, you will be more than prepared to face the



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ensuing onslaught of the Empire. The thing which causes the most problems, and people don't generally realise this, is arriving late at the scene of an Imperial ambush. Much of the time a failed mission could have been quite easily avoided by simply getting to the battle a couple of seconds earlier.

Think about it. How many times have you lost out because that essential freighter has been taken out by a torpedo launched by a Tie Bomber. The thing to do is this. If you target a craft and it is quite some distance away, redirect all laser and shield power to the engines. The difference this makes to the rate of closure is incredible. Now obviously your shields are vitally important, so it is essential to get them back up to strength before battle ensues.

When the distance between you and your foe is around say 1.50, hit each of the F9 and F10 keys three times. This will recharge both your shields and lasers to an increased rate. Now, if necessary redirect some of your laser power to the shields by pressing the shift key and F10 simultaneously. Your lasers recharge much more quickly than your shields, so you can afford to do this even up till the last moment and before you take that first shot. Very often this technique will mean the difference between success and failure, so it definitely is worth employing.

Another thing I find useful, especially when taking on fast moving Tie Fighters is to set laser configuration to fire linked. This means that it only takes a couple of hits to take out an enemy ship as opposed to several with single fire. The downside is that you cannot fire as often, as your weapons need to recharge for a second or two before another shot. You therefore need to be more accurate, making every shot count. If you have the skill the pluses far outweigh the minuses.

One last little thing, more of a tipette I suppose this one, is that it really isn't worth wasting your valuable proton torpedoes on anything smaller than a container or freighter. Using them on mere Ties is nothing more than sheer laziness, and besides, you never know when you might need them later on in the mission.

Oh my! Look at the time! You really must excuse me as I have a waiting room crammed full with patients, all with severe problems, and a mountain of paperwork the size of Nebraska. You simply wouldn't believe just how quickly the stuff mounts up. Well time to call the first patient. If you like you can sit in with me and make sure you listen carefully as you might even learn something.

R

IGHT THEN, WE'D BETTER GET DOWN TO BUSINESS I SUPPOSE... SEND IN THE FIRST PATIENT PLEASE...

At long last, perhaps someone can now actually help me with my problem. You would not believe how long I have been waiting for someone like you to come along. I am currently tearing my hair out over LucasArts latest masterpiece, Day of the Tentacle.

I have been playing this for a couple of weeks and have progressed to the point where Dr. Fred has fallen asleep and has taken to sleepwalking. He is now trying to open the safe and discover what is inside, but every time the safe opens he sees something nasty and slams the door shut.

Unfortunately, Bernard is never quite quick enough to catch the combination. What should I be doing to find it out?

Mike Salisbury,
Wakefield.

Ah, now this is a game that I really don't mind giving advice on. It takes a lot for a game to even raise a smile out of me, but this one positively had me rolling in the aisles. However, I am slightly exasperated that you have chosen to bother me with such a simple problem. Still these things are sent to try us I suppose.

By this time you should have discovered the video tape in Tentacle's room. Go to the room in which Ed's mother is monitoring the closed circuit video monitors. Push her out of the room and use the video tape in the video. You can now record Dr. Fred opening the safe and play the tape back at slow speed to discover the combination which will open the safe.

I am hopelessly stuck in Space Quest V: The Next Mutation from Sierra. I know everyone says it is really easy, but there you go. I think I have almost reached the end, but for obvious reasons I cannot be sure. I do not have any real specific problem, I am just basically stuck, so I will detail my most recent actions and my current location.

Having talked to Cliffy in the transporter room on board the Goliath I have returned to the Eureka. Once on the bridge, I got Droole to fire at the blob and then activate the RRS.

Now I am completely stumped on what to do next, everything I think of seems to have no positive effect whatsoever. Could you please inform me as to what I am doing wrong and how to get to the end?

Danny King,
Solihull.



Day of the Tentacle is without doubt the best looking graphic adventure game seen on any computer to date

Some criticised the Lucasfilm masterpiece for being too easy. Then thjink again



You are indeed right to think, that you are near the end of this absurdly easy, yet enjoyable adventure. So close in fact, that I am able to detail every action you need to take so that you can reach the very end.

Tell Flo to instruct the crew to abandon the ship. Return to your seat and initiate the self destruct sequence. Then quickly go to the transporter room and energise the contraption. As you know, Roger is not that lucky and so obviously the transporter will not work. You must however go to the fuse box in the main corridor and replace the middle fuse.

Dodge the blob by using your hand on the door and return to the transporter room. When Beatrice has beamed off the ship, get Spike and stand on the transporter pad yourself. Last of all use the transporter. Now all that there is left to do is to sit back and enjoy the end sequence.

I have a serious problem. I am dying to play Monkey Island 2 - LeChuck's Revenge, but a long time ago I made a promise that I would not buy it until I had completed the first game. Unfortunately, this is proving to be taking a lot longer than I first anticipated as I am still hopelessly stuck and confused.

So far I have got onto the boat, found the key in the cereal packet, opened the cabinet and got the note. Does the note mean anything special? Do I have to get into the cannon? I can fire the cannon, but Guybrush won't get in.

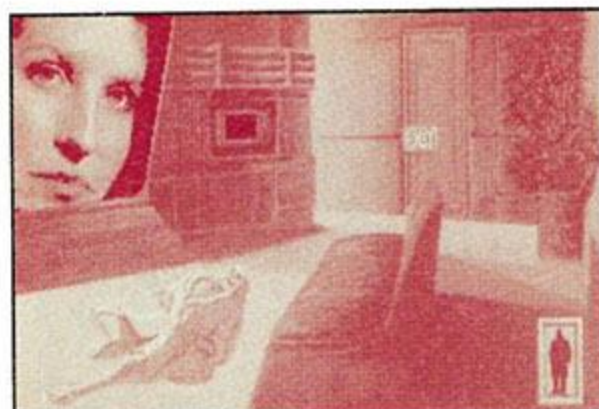
Please help me before I go completely insane!
Ian,
Hants

What is it? Do people only play graphic adventures these days or what? A bit of variety wouldn't go amiss here I think. As for your problem, I think that if you take much longer over this there is serious danger of Monkey Island 2 being deleted before you get around to buying it. The note you have found is a recipe that you must follow before even attempting to escape from the ship. You won't have the ingredients necessary to complete the mixture but no one will notice if you substitute one or two items here and there.

The items you must use are as follows:- cinnamon stick, breath mint, jolly roger, fine wine, writing ink, rubber chicken, gunpowder and cereal. If you use these ingredients Guybrush will then pass out. When he wakes up, use the T-shirt on the flames under the pot, then go and get



the struggle



Rise of the Dragon, the only cyber punk type game available. Definitely not one for the faint hearted amongst you

some more gunpowder. Use this powder with the cannon nozzle and then use the pot. Guybrush will automatically blast himself off the ship and onto the island.

As you are probably aware X-Wing is bloody hard! I consider myself to be a proficient games player with many years of experience behind me, but this one is just too much, even for me.

Having failed the training levels I then moved on to the historical combat missions, in which I think I am doing reasonably well. I have completed all of the A-Wing missions and gained promotion, but now I am having terrible difficulties on X-Wing mission three, Satellites Near Coruscant. I cannot get anywhere near the mines without getting obliterated by their lasers. Please help me as I have nowhere else to turn.
Mark Conboy,
Salford

You were right to come to me for advice as this game can quite seriously damage your health if you are not careful. This is a particularly tricky mission and I can see how lesser players such as yourself could quite easily come a cropper.

The trick to this one is to take out the two freighters as soon as possible. To do this, target the first one immediately and switch to proton torpedoes. Now press the X key once to set the protons to dual fire. Now stop your engines by hitting the slash key. As soon as you get a lock tone, fire your missiles. Immediately target the next freighter and fire as soon as you have a tone. Don't worry about missing, as long as you were locked on, the missiles will do their job and finish off both craft.

Now it is just a case of targeting each individual mine and comms sat and destroying them. The way to do this is find one of the closer mines (there are two groups), get that to around 1.30 away and cut your engines. You will now be out of range of their fire but will still be able to take them out with some accurate shooting. Do this until every object is destroyed and then hyperspace away long before the Imperial Frigate even arrives.

I have recently acquired a copy of the excellent Flashback from US Gold and could really use a little of your help. I have found that I have reached the Master Brain near to the end of the game, but cannot for the life of me work out how to finish it off. I would greatly appreciate any help that you can offer, as I am really struggling now.
Sarah Jones,
Kent

X-Wing is definitely my favourite game at the moment. Many of you are finding it very hard going though



It is so rare to come across a decent platform game on the PC, and it was nice to see Delphine proving that it was possible. The problem that you have encountered is actually not that difficult once you know how to do it, although I will concede that it is a little tricky at first.

Destroy the two metamorphosing enemies at the bottom of the screen and climb up onto the platform on the left hand side. Blaze away at the brain until you can see that your weapon has done its job. Now drop down to the bottom again. Two more morphing enemies will appear. Destroy them and climb up onto the right platform. Shoot the brain again. Repeat this process until your foe is destroyed.

I have owned Monkey Island II for quite some time now and am thoroughly enjoying playing it. However, I have come to a grinding halt. I have arrived on Phatt Island and no matter what I do Guybrush seems to always arrested. Is this really meant to happen or am I doing something wrong?

By the way, I am a rather beautiful, blue eyed blonde, if that helps my case in any way.
T. Bates,
West Bromwich.

To be honest it doesn't help your case at all. For one thing, you are a rather beautiful blue eyed, blonde what? If it is male I am certainly not interested, if it is female, my old heart couldn't stand the excitement, and if it is anything else it doesn't bear thinking about! So let's stick to the point shall we!

The answer is as always, simple when you know how. See that wanted poster? See that picture of you on it? Well obviously this is the cause of your problems. The solution is a little cruel but who cares. Take Kate's leaflet and paste it on top of the wanted poster. This way the guards will be looking for her and not you, and she will get arrested instead. There's nothing like a bit of rough justice is there!

Rise of the Dragon. I know it's old but I really do need help with it. I have got into the sewer and discovered the cabinet containing the phone lines. Now it seems obvious to me that you have to tap these in some way, but I can't figure it out. Can you help?

By the way, can you tell me if Dynamix are

planning to do a sequel to this, and if not, why not? It really is a truly excellent game.
B. Hirst,
Birmingham

I have to agree that it is an excellent game. I did not know the answer to your question about a sequel so I consulted my all seeing oracle, which informed me that at present there are no plans for a follow up. Shame that, but never mind.

As for your phone tapping query here is what you have to do. First, remember that you must only connect the clips when the two voltage meters are in green, or preferably at zero.

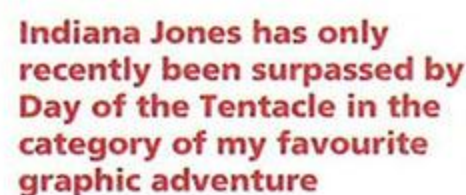
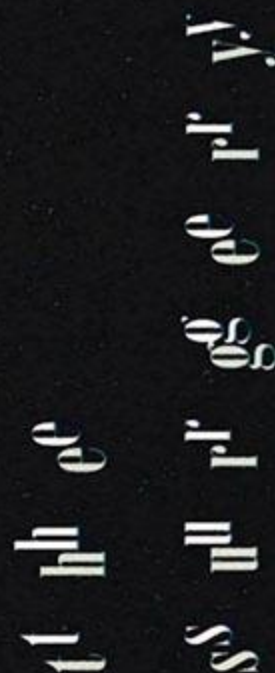
When they are, place the blue clip on the bottom of the black wire, then place the red clip on top of the red wire. Finally, place the yellow clip on the second wire up from the bottom. The game will let you know if you have been successful and you can then move on into the game.

At last, a column that addresses the needs of games players as opposed to just filling up endless pages with complete solutions to games. Where have you been all my life? When I think of the endless hours I have wasted sinking into oblivion, despair setting in, my head in my hands simply because I have come to a halt in my latest game. Thank the lord that - (enough! - Doc). Anyway, my problem is with KGB. How do I get inside the club? No matter what I do I am just not allowed in, why is this? Also, what am I supposed to do now?
Ronnie Salmon,
Windermere.

Now I'm all for a little praise every once in a while but you can take it a little too far you know. I was getting embarrassed for a minute back there.

The easiest way to get into the club is through the back, from the landing where the upstairs apartments are located. Do not enter the club with the clipboard because it belongs to the manager and he obviously won't be pleased if he finds out who had it.

To gain admittance you'll have to pay the manager \$30, which can be found in the drawer in your bedroom at Uncle Vanya's. Once inside the club, avoid taking the hidden dollars from inside the toilet. Wait instead for the punk to visit and leave the toilet, after that go in and take the cocaine from the dustbin, make sure you flush the cocaine down the toilet.

[illegible]

I'm really glad you added that last line. There was me just about on the verge of dying and peniless, when along you came with your own little piece of advice. Well thanks, but in future I'll give out

FORTUNATELY, THAT'S IT FOR THIS MONTH, AS I AM GROWING TIRED OF ANSWERING YOUR QUESTIONS. HOWEVER, I WILL NO DOUBT RETURN NEXT ISSUE, WHEN EVEN MORE OF YOU WILL REQUIRE MY ASSISTANCE. IF YOU DO, SEND YOUR PLEAS FOR HELP TO THE ADDRESS BELOW, AND THEY WILL BE PASSED ON TO ME. UNTIL THEN.

THE SURGERY, PC ACTION, EUROPA HOUSE, ADLINGTON PARK, MACCLESFIELD SK10 4NP.

COMPETITION

Revell's high performance

Prizes worth £500!
Five copies of



Revell's high
performance Motor
Sports CD game
and model kits to
be won! Get
yourself and your
PC into gear and
into the fast lane...

With CD-ROM becoming more and more popular everyone wants a piece of the pie, and with new influences constantly entering the fray, the various other applicational sides of CD are becoming more and more apparent.

Revell, probably the largest manufacturer of model kits in Europe have introduced their own experience into the CD-ROM market and come up with a racing car game based around their own models — Motor Stars — which received massive acclaim at the Chicago CES show. In each CD Pack comes a model car kit and it is here that Revell have utilised the CD to its best potential.

Instead of wading through piles of assembly instructions you can watch an animated 3D sequence which visually displays how the model should be fitted together. Helpful tips are offered on the right type of glue and paint to use. You can even try out a selection of body colours before painting the real thing.

Once your chosen car is assembled, you race off to compete in your first challenging contest. Then when you've managed to dodge the protruding obstacles and outrun the police, you reach the track. Now it's time to prepare yourself for a highly thrilling five lap race of thrills and spills.

The actual game itself features five of the most high performance vehicles available in the world today; the Bugatti EB110, Porsche 911 Slant Nose, BMW Nazca M12 and the Lamborghini LP500. Future releases in the series will be titled

American Street Cars, High-Tech Aircraft, Space and Dinosaurs.

Motor Sports includes four different tracks on which you can race the high performance cars against five other competitors.

There are plenty of additional video scenes with policemen, petrol attendants, sportscasters and pit crew members who pop their heads through your window and inform you of your current race status — be it good or bad.

PC Action, in association with Revell are offering five Motor Sports packages worth

£59.95 each as first prizes and five of the three featured cars in model kit form worth £11.50 each as runners up prizes. All we want you to do is name the four cars shown in the picture taken from Motor Sports. Write your answers on the entry coupon and send it to:

PC Action, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP.

All entries should reach us no later than November 28.



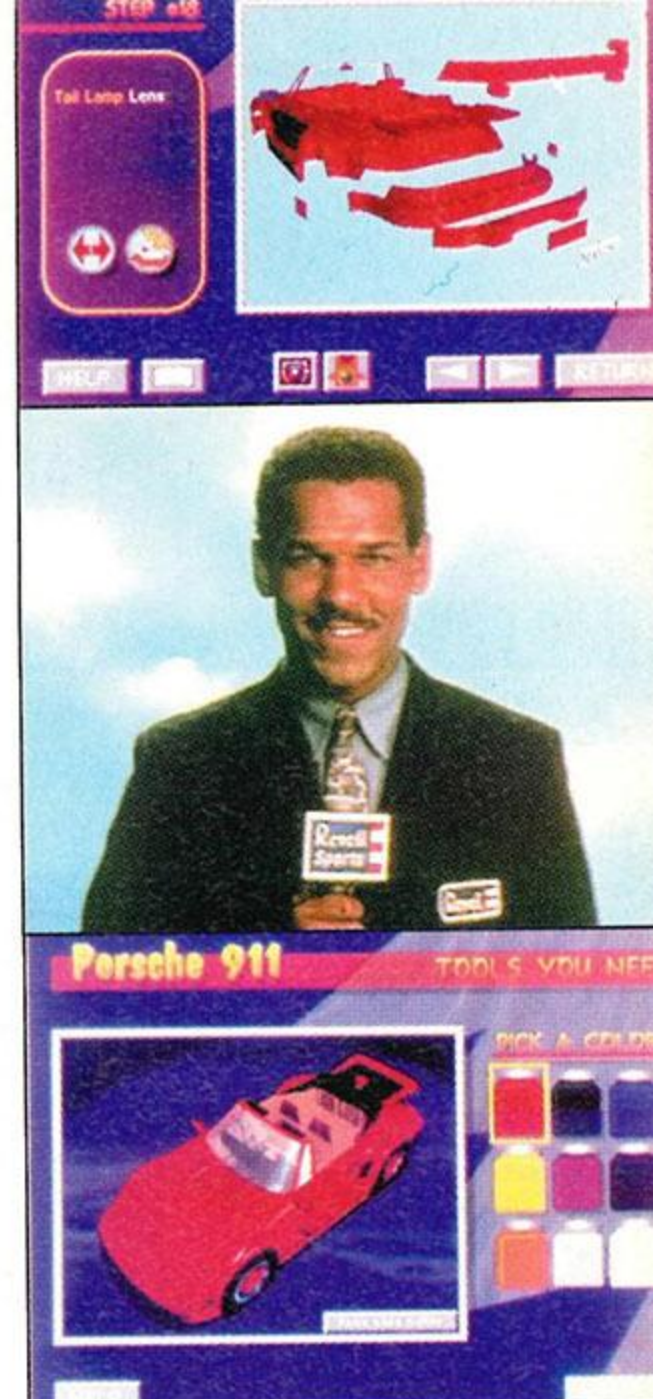
Car A is: _____
Car B is: _____
Car C is: _____
Car D is: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Age: _____

Employees of Revell and Europress may not enter this competition. Neither can their families. The editor's decision is final and no correspondence shall be entered into.



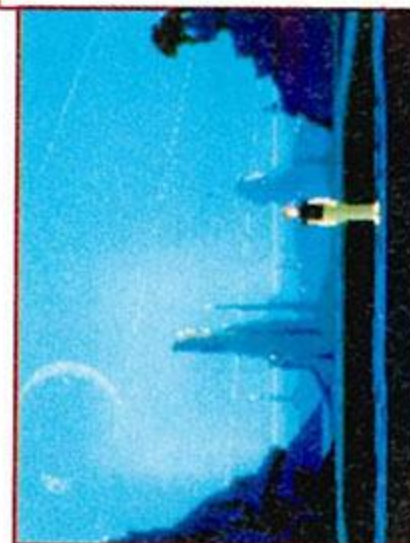
the bottom line

If you've started saving up for those Christmas presents already, your software fund may be a bit lower than normal. So now it's time to have a look at the cheaper re-releases now available

ANOTHER WORLD

With Flashback having arrived on the PC it's no surprise to see its prequel make a welcome re-appearance. Another World stunned gamers with its amazing, fluid animation, the likes of which had only been seen in PD demos.

Taking control of a young scientist who has been transported to a far off planet, you have to escape the clutches of the hostile alien dictatorship and try to find a way back home. Along the way, you can make an alliance with a sympathetic alien who will then help you on your



desperate quest for freedom. Anyone who's familiar with the classic Prince of Persia will certainly feel at home with this game. It's perhaps a little easy to complete, but good fun nonetheless. If you missed out on this originally then now is the time to rectify that mistake.

K/XX £12.99

LINKS + COURSES

There's certainly a large niche for golf games in the market, because what can be more relaxing than to have a quick round in front of your PC? Links was one of the first realistic simulations of the game and US Gold latched onto a good money-spinner by releasing lots of extra course disks so you could add to your collection as you went along. It's certainly a nice looking game but a speedy PC is needed to run it effectively, otherwise things just really slow down and drawing a screen



can take ages. There's sampled speech tucked away in there as well if you've got a little extra memory and overall, you get the feel of a well designed product. There are better full-price offerings around now (Links 386 Pro

ROBOCOD

Platform games aren't in plentiful supply for the PC. Many of the big names such as Zool have already arrived, but as yet the standard has not been particularly high really. RoboCod is still a good game, it's just not as good as some of the other home computer versions found in the marketplace.



In case you've never seen it in action, you control Robocod around the various platform levels in a bid to save Santa Claus. He's been kidnapped by the nasty Dr. Maybe who plans to make the world unhappy by stealing all their pressies.

It's all so inviting, you won't be able to leave it alone. If you like platforms, then you'll like this as it genuinely is one for all the family.

K/XX £12.99

ROBIN HOOD

There was a time not so long ago when all things Robin were in fashion. Kevin Costner was

Hollywood's very own forest favourite and Millennium produced a successful game.

The Adventures of Robin Hood caught everyone by surprise by coming in a 3D isometric format. It was also a bit of a shock that it was such a good game. You have to take control of Robin, while he tries to get Maid Marion to fall in love with him. As an added problem the Sheriff of Nottingham also wants your blood as you continue to rob from the rich and give to the poor. There are plenty of sub

quests to keep the adventure flowing, befriending the Merry Men is only one of these. It's not the most difficult game to complete but the task will engross you for the hours it takes to finish it off.

K/XX £12.99

by wire



For many years now games playing has always been considered a lonesome hobby – a kind of one man and his PC. On-Line Entertainment, based in London, want to be the first to change this now dated opinion

multi-player games have been extremely popular in the US now for several years and have gradually built up a huge user base – a kind of Interactive Community in which PC and other computer owners can communicate and play games with each other over a telephone line.

The process of going on-line requires a PC and a modem which can transfer and receive data through the phone line. All you pay for is the phone bill and perhaps a membership fee to the BBS (Bulletin Board System) operators.

On-Line Entertainment was the first multi-player BBS system established in the United Kingdom and, due to its efficient service and high quality games, it now has a United Kingdom membership well into the thousands, a figure which seems to be growing all the



and David Leadbetter's Golf both are better full-price options) but for a low priced game you can't expect any better than this. Don't expect it to run unless your equipment is set up properly.
K/XX £12.99

CJ'S ELEPHANT ANTICS

Most budget titles these days are simply re-releases of old popular titles. Original games are hard to come by and tend to be less successful anyway. One exception to the rule seems to be CodeMasters. This Midlands based company consistently produce budget games of a high enough quality to guarantee them success. CJ's Elephant Antics has already enjoyed success on the other 16 bit formats. CJ's friends have been kidnapped and he must set them free. The elephant sprite is extremely cute but the game, while being good, just lacks that certain something that big-sellers like Zool and Robocod have had in the past.
CODEMASTERS £7.99



INDIANAPOLIS 500

This game seems to have been around for a long time, but it's now out on budget. Simulating the gruelling Indy 500 race, you must race around the track putting your neck on the line lap after lap. There are plenty of camera shots so you can view all your horrific crashes from many different angles. In case you are unsure about what exactly Indy car racing actually is, it's what Nigel Mansell left Formula One to do. The tracks tend to be oval and the cars can easily reach speeds of over 200mph.

It's not the easiest of games to pick up as racing around an oval when all the different rules are quite complicated. Any kind of crash brings marshalls out on the track waving flags! Having said that things can really get quite hectic in a short space of time. There are a couple of new Indy games on the horizon but they'll still have to be pretty good to beat this original offering.

Indianapolis 500 is tremendously riveting once you get into it. It's just getting into it that's tricky. It's not the best car game on the market but in its day it was. Action and fun all the way and it hardly takes up any of your hard drive.

HIT SQUAD £14.99



WING COMMANDER

Since this space combat simulator was released, designer Chris Roberts has gone on to bigger and much better things (most recently Strike Commander and also Privateer). He will always be remembered throughout the whole software industry for this though, which is no bad thing. It is still an excellent piece of software. Lots of missions are included and there are several endings to the game. Everything depends on how well you progress in the war you are fighting against the Kilrathi. Fight poorly and things will go badly for your side. At a bargain price you can't really go wrong, especially if you're a fan of his other stuff. If you have Wing Commander 2 then perhaps this isn't as good a deal, but if you originally missed out then you could certainly do a lot worse than consider this for your shelf-space. If you can't afford Roberts' later games at the moment, then this classic will tide you over until pay day.

HIT SQUAD £14.99



PUSHOVER

Curly Colin is a strange old character for a computer game. Never before has the star of a crisp advert been taken away to feature in a game of his own.

Pushover is the first of two Colin games (the other being the more recent One Step Beyond).

Being a puzzle game the plot is a little strange. You must aid Colin as he tries to rescue his beloved bags of Quavers. However, as he is too big to get underground (where they are stored) he enlists the help of G.I. Ant (that's you) and you must go through 100 levels of increasing difficulty to get them all. The idea is to knock over all the dominoes in the correct order to trigger the exit for the next level. Sounds confusing? It isn't actually that difficult to get to grips with.

Some of the pieces perform different actions and these must be worked out in the right manner in order for success to be achieved. At least it's additive to play.

Pushover will keep you going for a good while once you start playing it. Once you've finished it all, you might not go back to it very often but that's the same with the majority of puzzle games currently available on the market.

HIT SQUAD £12.99



time. Talking to Michael Hodges, who created On-Line UK along with Clem Chambers you sense a feeling of extreme excitement and devotion to their products.

'To use a computer can be a lonely thing. Also, computer opponents in traditional games can be very predictable and boring. The only way to change this is to get other people involved and that's where we come in. We want to change the way people see their computer - there's a world out there with people wanting to play, talk and be friends.'

Michael strongly believes in the friendship aspect of On-Line which he reports to be one of the most attractive elements aside from the games themselves.

'Lots of great friendships have been made through On-Line, even though that friend could be on the other side of the world. We call it the Interactive European Community and that's what it is, even though it's starting to spread to the rest of the world.'

The games currently offered have improved in quality over several years, mainly due to the incredible feedback that is received from users. The most popular game is Air Warrior, a flight simulation in which players can pilot various planes and jets from aviation history against each other over an artificial world. The other games include MUD, Federation II and Internecine, huge text-based adventures set in a role-playing environment.

'One of the most satisfying elements of On-

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Line is dealing with customers directly,' says Michael. It helps them get to know exactly what it is their members want. So just what can an On-Line user expect?

Michael is proud of the facilities offered. 'There are of course the games - Air Warrior, MUD, Federation, Internecine and soon Battletech and Islands of Kesmai. Members and non-members can choose from competitions, games reviews, the software charts and much more. We also offer



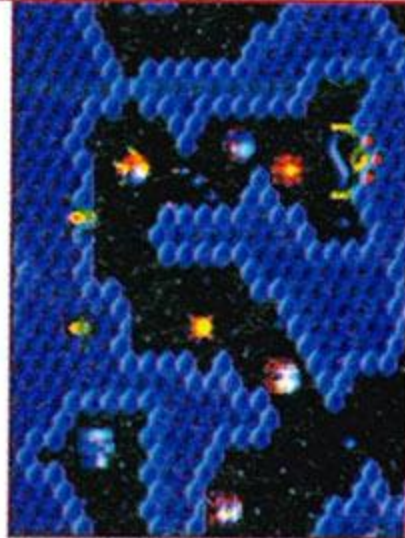
STRYX

Pynosis' budget label has never been particularly high profile but they do have a number of titles available on the shelves at the moment. One of them is Stryx which is a horizontally scrolling shoot 'em-up from 1991.

The main sprite is half-man and half-machine and the basic gist of the plot is that your planet has been taken over and your guy must free it.

Compared with some of the other games out there this is sub-standard by comparison. There isn't a wealth of blasting games for the PC and you might want to take a look at this seeing as it is so cheap but it really isn't worth more than the occasional 10 minute session.

SIZZLERS £7.99



HOOK

Ocean (just for a change) picked up the licence to this movie hit that revolves around the story of Peter Pan. Don't let that put you off though. This game isn't for the kids. It's an adventure game in the style of Monkey Island but it never quite manages to pull it off. There's an apparent class gap between this and the likes of Lucasfilm's quality products.

There is quite a challenge here but there are only really one or two puzzles that will cause you problems. Other than that you could waltz through it in no time at all. We've seen it completed within a couple of hours. Choose wisely.

HIT SQUAD £12.99



BLUE ANGELS

This early Accolade game is one many people will not have in their collection. It was never overly popular but a budget re-release may soon change that. You must take over as one of the elite pilots in the world, one of the Blue Angels. Your weapon of destruction is a FA-18 and you must be prepared to dance with danger.

Blue Angels doesn't just drop you straight in the thick of things, a complex wire-frame simulator will train you up to your maximum potential before you finally take to the skies to fulfil your mission as one of the defenders of peace as we know it. To be

RED BARON

Another Dynamix title coming out on Kixx XL is the World War I flight sim - Red Baron. It's a pretty old title that wasn't particularly well received the first time around. You can fly many different types of plane and do battle with various famous pilots, including the good ole Baron himself. Graphically the game is good but there is just something missing from it. There are plenty of other good flight simulations available and this rather dated offering should be best left alone.

K/XX XL £14.99



HEART OF CHINA

Certain Dynamix titles are also being released on the XL label. Heart of China is a beautifully presented adventure game in a similar vein to Rise of the Dragon and many other Sierra titles. One of the best things about this is that it has hardly dated and it can still hold its own in today's market.

At this kind of price it's a must and there are many hours of enjoyment to be gained from it. The plot sees you embroiled in a murder/mystery type scenario in the Orient. Controlling the game is simply by the use of the now standard icon system. It's all very nice and well worth a look.

K/XX XL £14.99



LEISURE SUIT LARRY

If you're prepared to wait a while there is some terrific stuff coming out on budget re-releases. Adventure gamers are about to go mad as Kixx XL start to put out the Sierra back catalogue. First onto the shelves is Leisure Suit Larry.

The white-suited one is back. You must take charge of top-class loser Larry in his bid to find happiness with lots of different women. Al Lowe is the designer (see the Profile elsewhere in this issue) so quality is assured. If you don't mind slightly risky humour (which, let's face it) can be quite sexist



Fly by wire

Internet, a world-wide network that connects over seven million computers to each other. If any of your readers have been to university and studied computers they will know all about the Internet, as most higher education and research establishments are

connected. This means you can log onto computers around the world and explore. Or you can just chat to other users. We also have international E-

Mail, enabling you to send messages around the world in seconds.

Although On-Line already have a wide selection of games they will soon be incorporating Battletech based on the popular role-playing game. Players control large droids which trundle around the play area blowing

each other apart. One of the most popular aspects of Battletech and most On-Line games is the ability to play in teams.

'Battletech advances the visual side of multi-player games. Mind you, by the end of this year we will be running a new version of Air Warrior that has improved features and detail.'

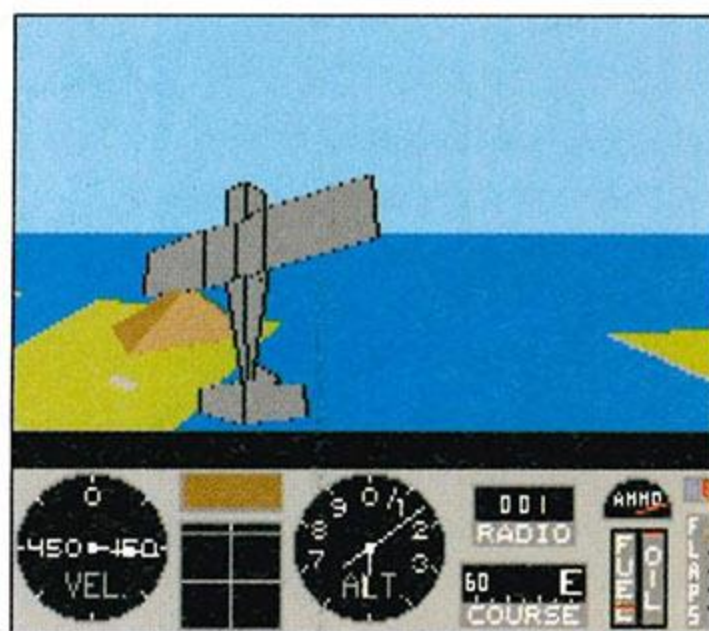
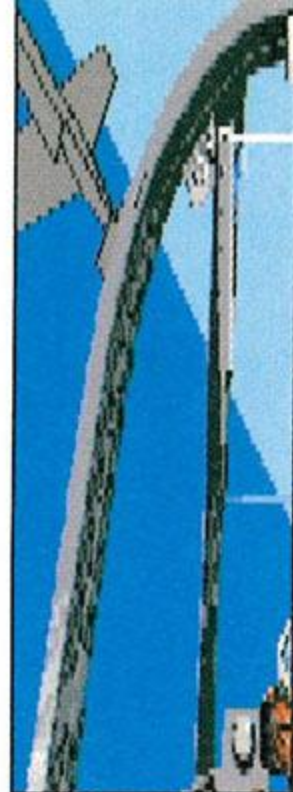
With CD-Rom becoming increasingly popular On-Line have no doubts about the contribution they are making, which has already seen the light of day.

'All of our products are available for CD-Rom now. CD-Rom is about to take off in a major way and when recent developments such as M-Peg becomes generally available we will be able to go beyond the boundaries of TV or films. At that point we won't be restricted to computer graphics and sounds, but real images and sounds - maybe even

CD-ROM IS ABOUT TO TAKE
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WHEN M-PEG BECOMES
GENERALLY AVAILABLE WE
WILL BE ABLE TO GO
BEYOND THE BOUNDARIES
OF TV OR FILMS

create the mystical interactive TV that people have been talking about for years.'

Whatever the case, On-Line look set for even greater things and with the user base growing day by day, multi-player games seem to have fixed themselves a firm place in the future of PC development. In next month's



honest Blue Angels isn't a nice cup of tea at all. It's dated and it shows. If you're desperate for yet another flight sim then take a look, but be careful out there.

HIT SQUAD £12.99

RISE OF THE DRAGON

A popular Dynamix game that follows the same basic idea as Heart of China. This time though the game is set far in the future and a new drug has taken the ghettos by storm. Everybody wants it even though it is slowly killing off the people who take it.

You play Blade Hunter (nice name!), a private detective who must uncover a series of mysteries before finally saving his girlfriend in a thrilling finale. If you have a SoundBlaster there is digitised speech in the intro. The control system is excellent, even when compared to the more modern ones preferred today.

The storyline is still second to none compared with some of the cheap ones released today. Rise of the Dragon gets an instant recommendation and richly deserves its re-release on budget.

KIXX XL £14.99

STEEL THUNDER

Another original Accolade release makes its way onto the Ocean budget label. Steel Thunder sees America's four best battle tanks coming up against the best the Russians have to offer. The tank of your choice is controlled entirely by yourself. Every crew members actions can be altered to provide the best from the machinery available. Tank games come and go. Campaign 2 is just around the corner and there

always seems to be

one company working

on a new title. Steel

Thunder is really no

exception to the

myriad of other similar

games in that it won't

appeal to everyone.

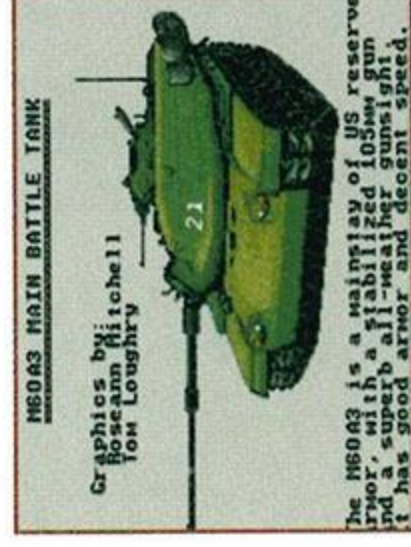
You either like tank

sims or you don't. This is a definite budget standard

release at a budget price, so the decision is yours but

don't say you weren't warned.

HIT SQUAD £14.99



at times, then you'll have a laugh with Larry. The entire series is set to come out throughout Europe over the next two years so keep your eyes peeled.

KIXX XL £14.99

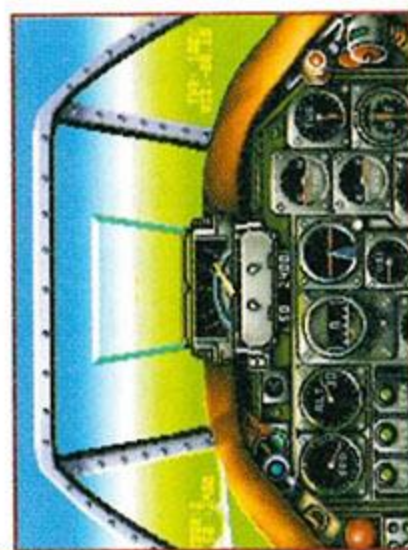
CHUCK YAEGER'S AIR COMBAT

Chuck Yeager, in case you didn't know, is a world famous American general. Now you can fly any of six different planes from three different periods in time. There are over 50 missions included in Air Combat ranging from Vietnam to Korea and right back to World War II.

One of the best features is the ability to match up aircraft from the different eras to see how they fair against each other. This

idea has recently been done better in MicroProse's Dogfight, but this is still a commendable game for its age. It would be nice to see some more modern stuff come out on budget but at the moment everybody just has to lap up the cream of the older stuff.

HIT SQUAD £14.99



UTOPIA

God games seem to have had their day, at least for the time-being. Utopia was one of the less successful offerings even though in many ways it was one of the slickest. Programmer Graham Ing has tried to produce a game where you must colonise new planets. It's not that simple though, because the local

inhabitants aren't too

pleased about visitors

and want to run them

out of the area.

Building defences are

the key to success. By

strategically placing

tanks and artillery, the

inevitable enemy

attacks can be fended off. Also sending your scouts

out will give some advance warning of what your foe

is up to but you will never be really sure about when

the attack will come.

This version of Utopia includes the New Worlds

data disk, so you get 20 worlds to conquer instead of

10. The ones that came with the original are hard

enough but the extra ones will take a really practised

hand to get anywhere near completing the whole

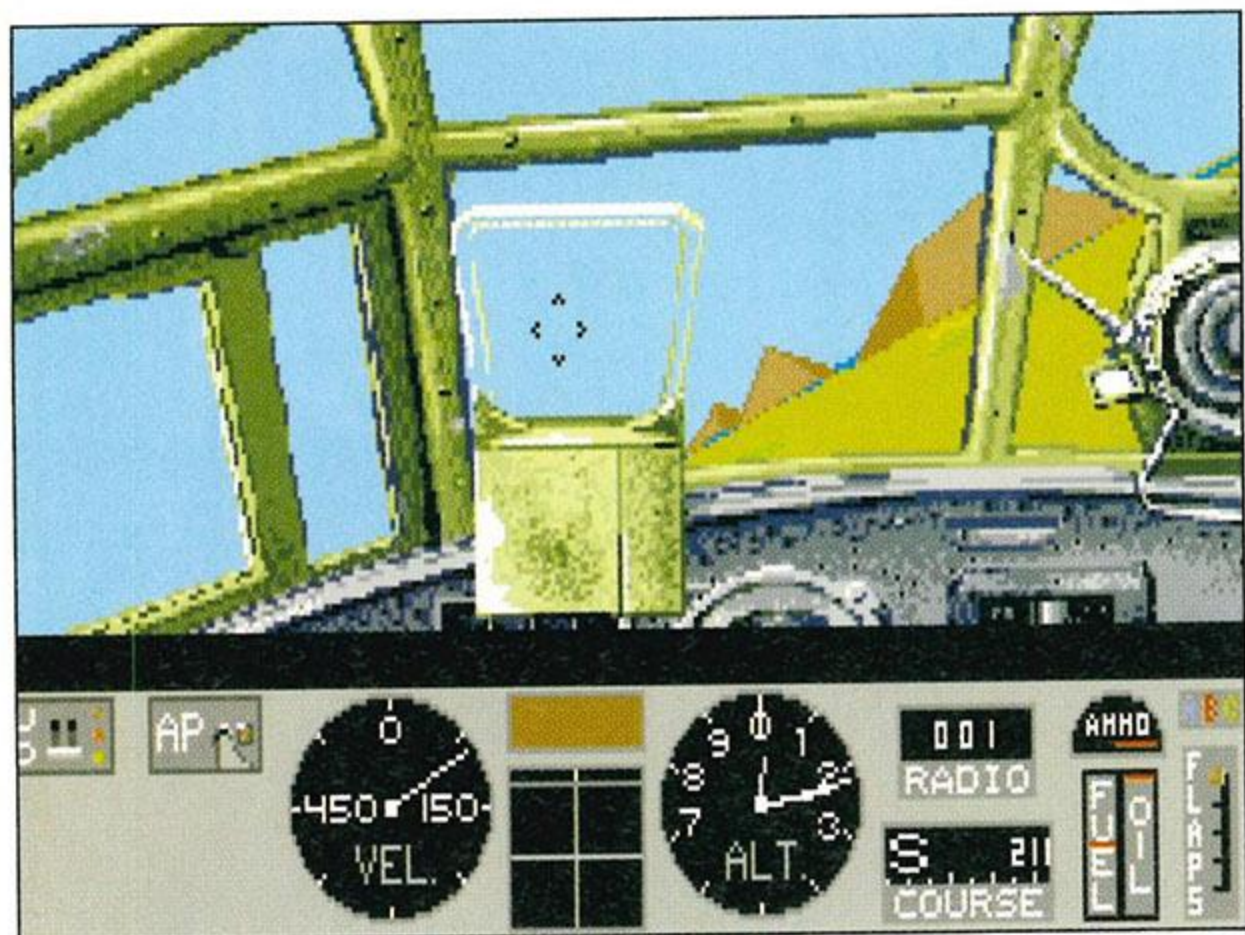
thing. A sequel is on the cards but this will tide you

over until that does arrive. Utopia is a good effort

that all fans of the genre will appreciate and get

into. Recommended.

GBH £12.99



issue of PC Action we will be taking a much more in-depth look at On-Line's multi-player games beginning with Air Warrior and explaining how you can get on-line and the costs involved.

STEVE WHITE

For further details contact:

Michael Hodges

On-Line Entertainment

642a Lea Bridge Road

London

E10 6AP

Tel: 081 558 6114

Host: 081 539 6763

COMPUTATION



On-Line are offering PC Action readers the opportunity to go on-line themselves and fly their communicative gameplaying skills through the wires and into an interactive multi-player world. All you need is access to a computer, a 'phone and a modem to enter the contest below. You could be one of over 2,000 lucky winners. Joint first prizes on offer are two one year free memberships to On-Line worth £120 each, while the 2,000 runners-up will each receive a month's free membership.

Before completing and returning the coupon you need to log onto the On-Line system and create an ID, password and an account now. It can then lie dormant until you know whether you are a winner or not. The host number to log onto is 081 539 6763.

Should you be lucky, then On-Line will inform you of the fact and your newly created account will be paid for either one month or a year, enabling you to participate in all On-Line activities immediately.

Questions:

Name the famous RAF Fighter of The Battle of Britain which also appears in Air Warrior? WAS IT: a: Spitfire b: Yak 9D c: Focke-Wulf 190A

Name	Age
Address	
Type of computer	
Type of modem	
On-Line ID (now logged on)	
On-Line password (now logged on)	
Answer to question	

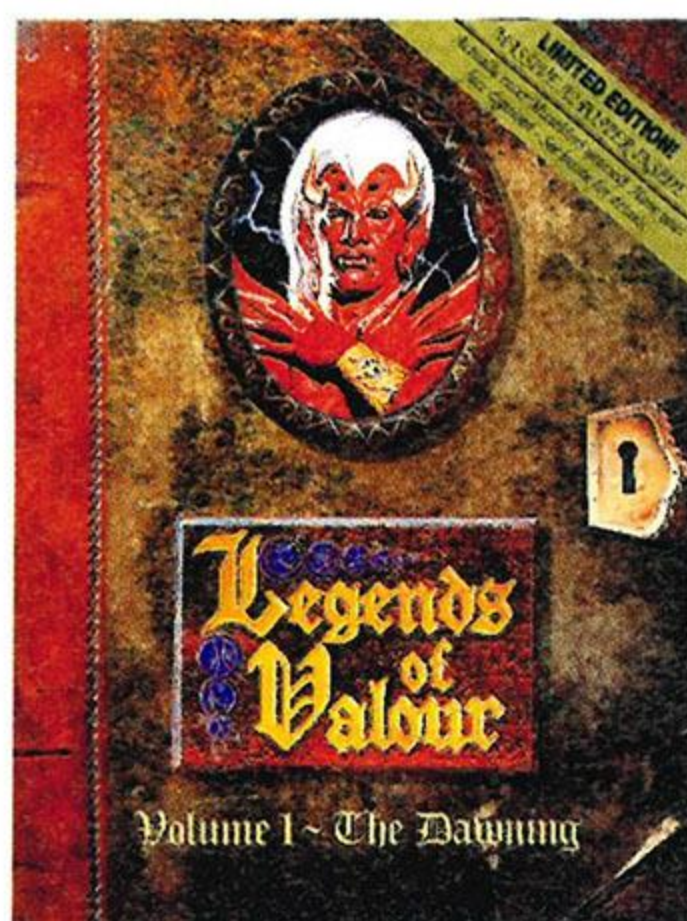
Entries to be in by November 28. Send to:

On-Line Competition, PC Action, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP.

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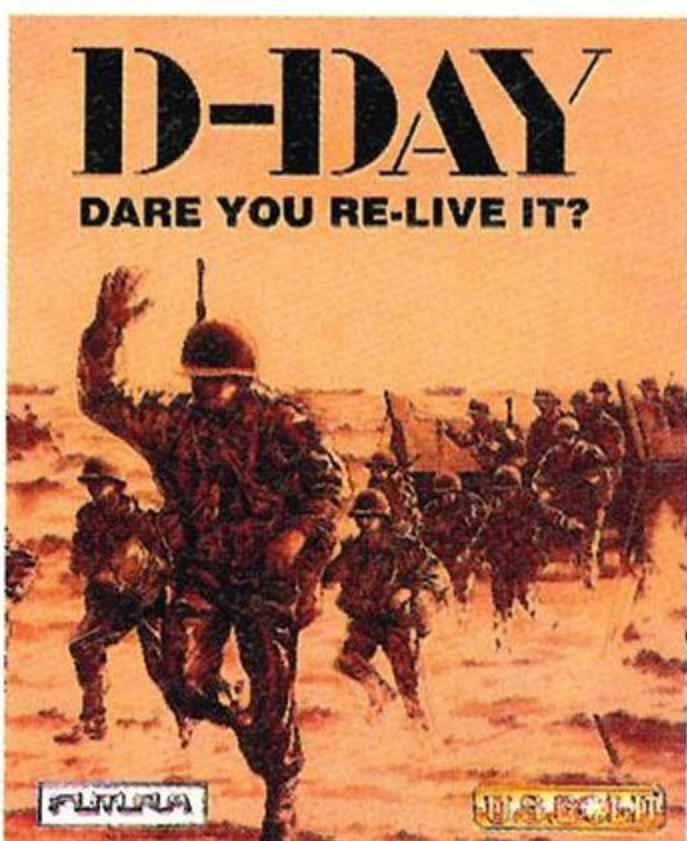
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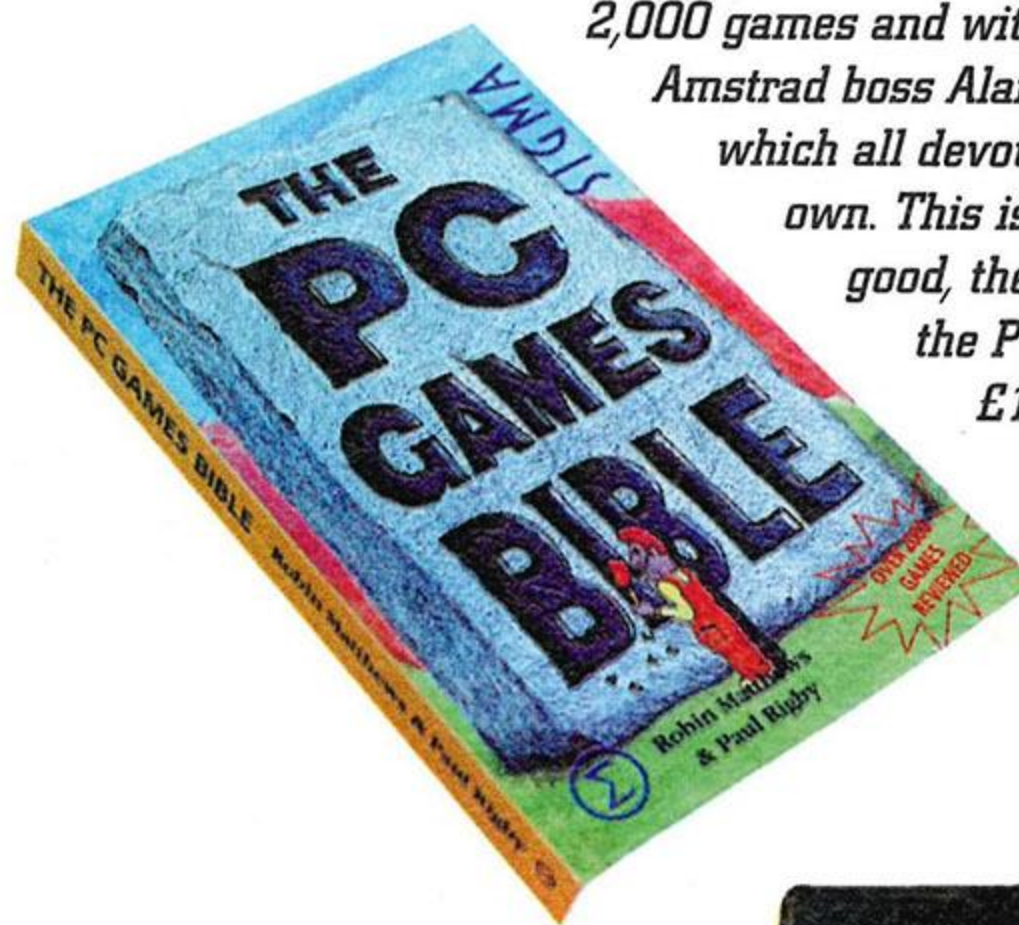
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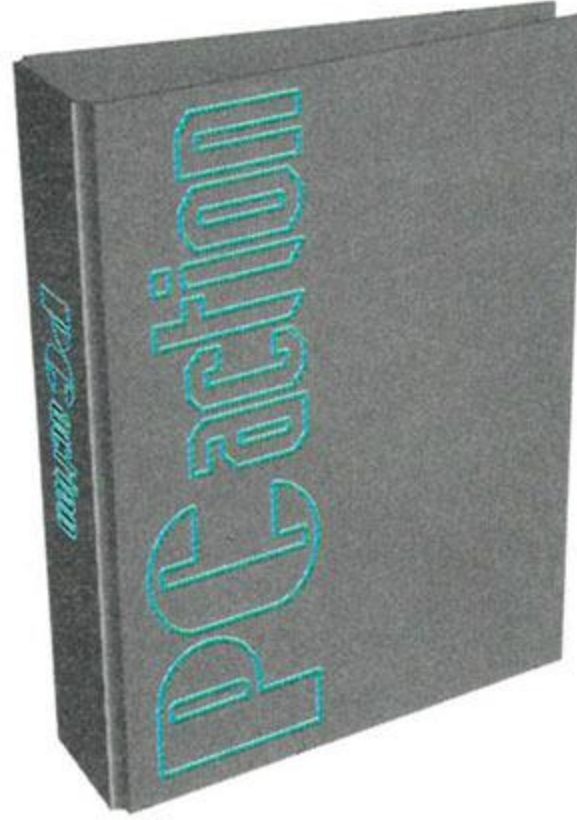
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BOSOMS AND LARRY
LAFFER. SHARON GREAVES
TALKS TO THE MAN WHO PUT THE OO-
ERR INTO THE VIDEO GAMES MARKET.

Al Lowe, Al Lowe.
What's this then. A
tongue in cheek
spoof on a Hollywood
book cover perhaps?
All that's left to be
desired to
complement the
effect is a pipe and
tweed jacket

NAME: Al Lowe

PROFESSION: Game Designer

GAMES PORTFOLIO: Creator of Leisure Suit Larry 1,2,3,5 and Freddy Pharkas Frontier Pharmacist

PROGRAMMING INPUT: Police Quest and King's Quest 3

Well, if you're appalled at the sexism inherent in the Leisure Suit Larry series then you've missed the point entirely,' proffers Al

Lowe. 'Larry's life style is not to be emulated – it's to be laughed at.'

Al, incidentally, is a happily married man who's just celebrated his 25th wedding anniversary. Going to singles bars out to score women is not an activity he participates in. Admittedly though he does infer that on no grounds will he reveal the origins behind the Leisure Suit Larry 6 storyline currently nearing completion for fear of marital retributions.

'Larry', he continues, 'is a big dork, a mother's worst nightmare. You'd be pushed to name me a man who's not had a similar experience and a woman who's not had the misfortune to date a man like him at some unfortunate stage in their life.'

But Larry, despite being a guy ripe to be humiliated, does always win through in the end. At the base of Al Lowe's beliefs is that it is important that people achieve their goals in life. As crucial is the ability to laugh at embarrassing situations.

This is a man who's been growing in stature with the video game market since 1982. His first foray was with a children's story called Dragon in the fledgling educational software market.

Ken Williams, a man also interested in the as yet untapped potential of edutainment bought the rights to the game and in the process gave Al the freedom to do as he pleased and create his own personal portfolio of game characters.

After gaining an MA in music he trained as a high school music teacher and went on to teach. He bought an early Apple 2, devoured books on software programming in a bid to teach himself how to create his own software and then basically set about carrying it out.

The result was the ubiquitous Leisure Suit Larry. 'I thought that the market was ready for adult humour,' says Lowe, referring back to events of 1987.

The Hitch Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy had just come out but this was a dry sort of humour. It was time for a Benny Hill type of approach to comedy and sex. I wanted something risqué, funny and also pretty dumb.'

In the early days of the Apple 2 a popular soft porn text only story was floating around. Using this as a premise Al set about creating a 3D animated graphic adventure.

As it happened a salesman called Gary who used to hang out in the Sierra offices was lynched. He wore a leisure suit and exhibited all the signs of someone who was lame, out of date and frequented single bars. Al changed the name to Larry purely for alliteration purposes and so an anti-hero was moulded.

'I enjoy having lots of freedom in the games I design. I have to be able

'THE ONLY PRESSURE I HAVE IS THAT WHICH I IMPOSE UPON MYSELF'

at all well. People were slightly scared of it I think and they also thought it obscene.' Word of mouth soon travelled though and in the process sales picked up, so much so that it is now the number 2 Sierra game behind King's Quest.

Freddie Pharkas Frontier Pharmacist, Al Lowe's most recent PC game has received accolades both from American and British quarters. 'Larry 5 attracted criticism due to its icon interface. We hadn't realised that much of the difficulty in previous games actually came from typing in exactly the right words to solve the puzzles.

'For Freddy I wanted to go with the new Sierra icon based interface but still retain the puzzles from the past. Freddy is primarily plot orientated insofar as it presents puzzles to players in set sequences. All too often there can be a conflict between a story and a player's freedom to move anywhere and it can prove to be difficult to balance the two.

'A set story takes away the possibility of doing anything and going anywhere at any time. To initiate a conflict followed by a resolution you must have a sequence. This is integral to the plot. In Freddy you come across puzzles of varied length and make progress via a learning curve.

I try hard to think through the entire structure of a game before tweaking it and adding ornamentation,' adds Al. 'Work on Freddy began in 1991 and I dedicated five months to its design before a team of five artists and three writers and programmers were assembled for ten months of programming.'

Game research entailed renting every western movie from the local video shop, making made a list of western clichés and then putting the Al Lowe tongue in cheek twist on them.

The plethora of sheep taking a slice of the action in the game became a perverted in-joke. When drawing the storyboard they just kept appearing within the frame. Hence the inclusion of a sheep weather vane, dancing sheep girls, a brothel scene with a sheep et al.

The Wild West arena too is new ground to be ploughed. Particular piquant is the fact that Sierra On-Line is based in Coarse Gold, California which used to be a gold town.

Just listening to Al's bubbling enthusiasm only serves to confirm his statement that his career has been all ups. Just like a movie reviewer who goes to premiers as a critic he may find himself analysing games rather than playing them just for fun but, at the end of the day he's out to entertain. Oh, on the subject of Larry 6, Al assures me it's going to be wonderful. Larry wins a trip to an expensive health

spa called La Costa Lotta but is trapped there with, horror of horrors, a multitude of beautiful women. His ultimatum? 'Shape up or slip out'.

'LARRY IS THE SWINGING SIDE THAT I NEVER EXPRESSED. LET'S JUST CALL ME A LATENT SWINGER'

spa called La Costa Lotta but is trapped there with, horror of horrors, a multitude of beautiful women. His ultimatum? 'Shape up or slip out'.



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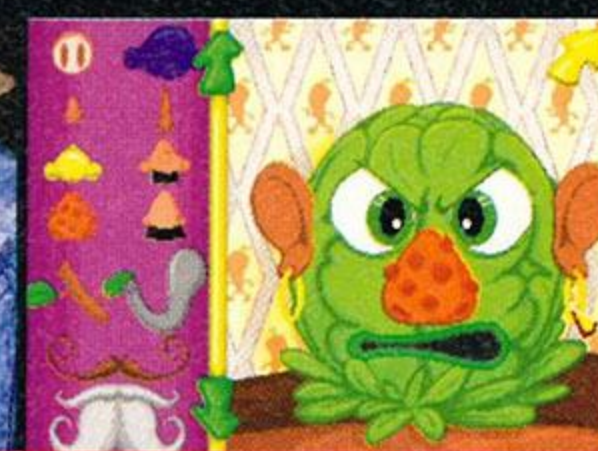
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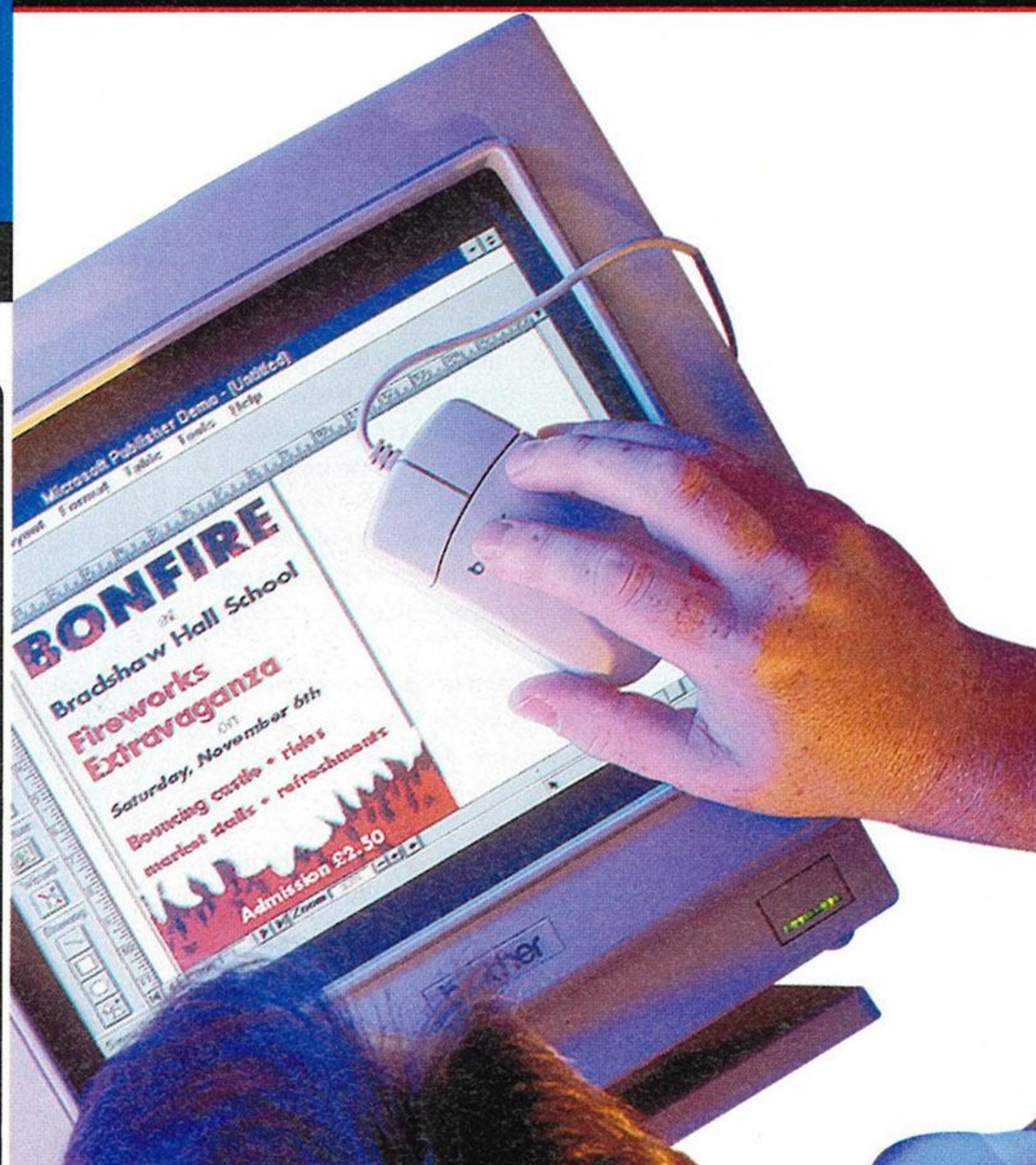
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network

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flying high

I wonder if you can help me with a small question. Why are high density disks more expensive than double density ones?

I have read all sorts of things about them saying that you can format any disk to 1.4 megabytes. Is this true? Am I likely to lose data?

Also, I am not a very good manual reader, but a friend of mine tells me I can quick-format a disk, but he didn't tell me how. Can you help?
Keith Taylor, Wimbledon. London.

A lot has been written on the subject of High and Double Density disks, so here is the full SP.

All disks are checked when they are made and run through a series of tests to decide how good they are. Those that pass with flying colours are designated as high density and the rest are graded as 720k. If they don't meet that standard, they may be sold as unbranded or bulk disks. The difference is not just in the disks themselves, but also in the guarantee you get with them. Branded disks are usually guaranteed for life, whereas unbranded may not, although most dealers will replace faulty disks themselves. For business and important data, it's wise to use quality disks, but for file transfers and short term storage, the bulk or unbranded are good enough. If you need to be sure of the data being safe, you should make a second backup of it and keep it out of harm's way no matter what disks you're using. HD disks are identified by the extra hole on the opposite side of the write-protect hole (top right as you look at the front of the disk) and the letters HD printed on them.

There is a device marketed by Byte International (071 582 4844) that will cut a notch in a double sided disk to enable it to be formatted to 1.4 Mb, but at £45.83, it's a little expensive. Personally, I wouldn't recommend using a device like this, but it's horses for courses.

You pay your money and you take your choice. I could write a book about the stories I hear with regard to disks. I can remember cutting notches in 5.25 inch disks back in the old 8-bit days of the Atari 800 machines and I only lost a couple of the programs. I've never used them for important files, though.

Your second point is a lot simpler. All you need to do is type -
FORMAT A: /q. This will check the existing format and if it is the same as you've specified, it will complete the task in a few seconds.

slow opening windows

I have recently bought a new computer. After owning a home 'games machine', I decided to buy a 486sx25 (Intel processor) with four megabytes of RAM and a 170 Mb hard drive. It came with DOS 6 and Windows 3.1 pre-loaded.

The problem is that Windows seems painfully slow. I know that it has a reputation, but I reckon there's something wrong. I sit and watch a line scroll down the screen that seems to take ages each time I do something. My friend has a 386dx40 (AMD processor, he says) and it seems to be a lot faster than mine. When he got it, he came round and ran some tests. Then he told me that my computer was a lot faster than his, but Windows still plods along at about a third of the speed of his. Can you advise me as to how to speed it up?
Peter Lander, Warrington, Cheshire

The first thing that you should check is the video card in your machine. I'm willing to bet that you will find that you have a very basic one in there. I'd advise buying a one megabyte card complete with a Windows

accelerator on board. That'll make everything work a lot faster.

which computer?

I am thinking of buying a new computer. I currently have an Atari ST and get frustrated that there aren't many games coming out for it. Reading through the magazines, there are a lot of different prices for what appear to be the same specification of PC. What should I look for and what minimum requirements do I need?
Terry Maton, Perivale, Middlesex

The minimum specification you should look for is a 486sx25 with four megabytes of RAM and the largest hard disk you can afford. You need to examine the video card (see the last letter) and see what you get in the package. Cheap is not always the least expensive in the long run.

Take time to look at the total package and read as much as you can before you buy. Look at after sales service and buy from an established company that offers the best deal.

hard decisions

I am in a bit of a dilemma. I am currently wondering whether to go for a second hard drive or a CD-Rom drive for my PC. As I can afford only one at this time I was wondering if you could tell me a few things about the CD format as I am a little unsure whether it is worth the expense at this stage?
R. Hammock, Kensington.

It depends on what you want to do. If you need extra storage space to save stuff on to, obviously you can't write to a regular CD so it would be useless for you. However 640MB can be stored on a single Compact Disc. If you want it for games, well that's picking up lately. Most popular titles suited to the format are hitting the shelves, so there are no problems there. For more details about CD-Rom take a look at PC Action's in-depth feature within these pages.

'There is nobody so irritating as somebody with less intelligence and more sense than we have'

network

This section of Network gives you the chance to voice your opinions, grievances and hopes about the computer gaming world. Tell us what you think by writing to:
PC Action, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP

missing data disks

I must confess that I am somewhat disappointed with computer games publishers who neglect their loyal user base. I'm not talking about damaged disks or after sale service but the continuing vacuum of promised product data disks.

A prime example is MicroProse Golf, later to become David Leadbetter's Golf, which promised course expansion disks. However, these disks never materialised. I much prefer this golf simulation to that of Lynx but I am rapidly becoming bored with the included courses.

LucasArts promised data disks for Their Finest Hour, Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe and X-Wing and lo and behold, here they are. If software houses really have no plans to release future data disks then they should say so. There are plenty of other companies who have promised data disks and not delivered and if this apparent backward policy continues, I for one will direct my support to someone else more deserving. I know this may seem somewhat childish and ridiculous but when I'm paying around £45 for a game I don't expect to be cheated or lied too.
Mr. D. Perry, Lancashire

We certainly think you have made a very good point there, Mr. Perry. However, we're sure that the problem lies deeper than just shrugging off a loyal user base – something which any intelligent company will always try to avoid.

It all depends very much on how well the initial product sells. If a computer game sells well and makes a considerable profit then this can be input back into the product with respect to data disks. However, if it fails, there really isn't any point in releasing expansion disks as these will suffer the same fate as the original product.

We are not totally convinced that MicroProse Golf was an entire flop and would have expected to see data disks pretty soon after its initial release. Perhaps what has held them back has been tight schedules and new releases, meaning that it was too late to launch them.

cd revolution

After years of saving up to buy myself a formidable PC computer I am now in severe doubt as to whether my purchase was really worthwhile. I presently own a 486DX with 210MB hard disk and all those extras that have pushed the PC out of the range of all other computer formats.

Unfortunately for me, it now looks increasingly more obvious that I am going to have to buy a CD-Rom drive. This is something that I was planning to do in the near future, but not to do right at the present time. The reason I find it imperative to buy

a CD-Rom drive is the release of Rebel Assault from LucasArts/US Gold, a CD only title. I loved X-Wing but was somewhat dismayed on hearing of the CD only sequel.

If this is to be the sole medium on which all future games are going to be released then what am I going to do with my 210MB hard disk? Also who is going to refund all that money that I have spent? I feel that there has been

somewhat of a waste involved. Maybe it's about time that magazines keep us better informed.
Mr. S. Fox, Yorkshire

platform invasion

I have several friends who own Amiga computers and I must admit they do seem to fair pretty well when it comes to games of the platform and shoot 'em-up genres.

Although I am probably considered as one of the older age group (35) I must confess that I find these games highly attractive. I was very pleased to see the release of Zool from Gremlin Graphics which I immediately purchased but I strongly believe there should be many more arcade games for the PC.

Paul Jones, Manchester

It is very true to say that the PC has been biased towards simulation and adventure games for some time now, but software houses have been reluctant to commit conversions of the so-called younger games to the PC due to its older appeal.

Fortunately this attitude seems to be changing. You say that you already have Zool so try Flashback from US Gold, a platform adventure which has sold thousands over all formats.

Other games to look out for will be Magic Boy from Empire and

Prehistorik 2 from Titus, both platform games. Delta V from US Gold is a 3D scrolling shoot 'em-up which looks very good indeed. And if you think you may enjoy a pinball simulator try Pinball Dreams from 21st Century Entertainment. As more and more younger people become interested in the PC, games publishers will increase the range of their games and that includes greater support for arcade-style software.

the learning curve

My husband and I recently purchased a PC for our son on his birthday. Neither of us know much about the PC but as he is presently at school we would appreciate some advice on educational packages – or edutainment as I have seen it called.
Mrs. B. Sheridan, Cheshire

Well, you couldn't have picked a more suitable computer for educational value. We believe the best edutainment software houses that will be able to help you are; Europress Software, Sierra and The Jumping Bean Co.

Europress Software can be contacted on 0625 859444, The Jumping Bean Co. on 0602 792838 and Sierra on 0734 303322.

Q&A

In the software industry there are many terms, phrases and niggling, unanswered questions. No matter how diverse these queries may be, there will assuredly be someone somewhere who can furnish an explanation and ply you with those indispensable snippets of information that make embarrassing pauses in conversations a thing of the past. Not only will PC Action readers be invited to ask any sort of question in the video gaming field, but you will also be required to answer other people's questions too.

Q: Could you tell me exactly where the word 'bug' first originated?

A: The label 'bug' refers to an error in the machine code of a program or operating system and is almost as old as computers themselves. In the 1970s a woman naval officer found a malfunction in her computer, when she opened it up it turned out that it was a moth that was plugging up the entire system.

Q: I have seen in LucasArts' games much reference to the SCUMM system. I know that the term appeared with their first adventure games but what exactly does SCUMM mean?

A: The SCUMM system was developed by LucasArts in order to make creation of their excellent adventure games somewhat easier. The Indy and Monkey Island games all use the SCUMM system. But it was on their second adventure game, Maniac Mansion that the term was adopted for good. SCUMM therefore stands for Story Creation Utility for Maniac Mansion.

Q: I have seen much reference to bits and bytes and that there are supposedly so many bits in a byte. Could you tell me how many?

A: There are 8 bits to a byte and these can either be on (1) or off (0). Your PC uses bits and bytes in order to perform all tasks. The state of bits in a byte is normally indicated in binary.

Q: What is a nibble?

A: Half of a byte

BUT WHAT ABOUT...

Q: How many bytes is 512k?

Q: What was the name of the first adventure game to be released?

Q: What was the title of LucasArts', then LucasFilms first computer game?

Q: When was Virtual Reality launched in this country?

So what do you think about the new PC Action? And what can you tell us about yourself and your preferences which will help us make future issues of PC Action even better? Fill in this survey and send it to PC Action, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP. All returned surveys will go into a draw. The first 20 out of the hat will receive a copy of Rally, the exciting new racing simulation from Europress Software.

ABOUT YOU

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Age _____ ☐ Male ☐ Female

Do you have children?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do your children have use of a PC?

☐ Yes ☐ No

How old are your children?

☐ Under 5 ☐ 5/12 ☐ 13/16 ☐ over 16

Are you:

☐ Self employed ☐ Employed ☐ Unemployed

☐ A student ☐ Retired

☐ Other (please specify) _____

What is your annual income? (optional question)

☐ Under £10k ☐ £10k to £15k ☐ £16k to £20k

☐ £21k to £25k ☐ £26k to £30k ☐ Over £30k

YOUR MACHINE

What make of PC do you own?

What type?

☐ 286 AT ☐ 386 SX ☐ 386 DX

☐ 486 SX ☐ 486 DX

☐ Other (please specify) _____

What size hard drive? _____

How much memory? _____

What size discs?

☐ 5¼ low density ☐ 5¼ high density

☐ 3½ low density ☐ 3½ high density

What make of mouse (if any) or joystick do you own?

How much do you spend in a year on:

Hardware? _____

Peripherals? _____

Do you have a CD Rom:

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you intend to buy a CD Rom in the near future:

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you own another computer or games machine, which ones? _____

USE OF YOUR PC

Do you have a PC at home? ☐ Yes ☐ No

In the office? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Access elsewhere? ☐ Yes ☐ No

What percentage of time on your PC is spent doing the following:

Home accounts % Business applications %

Educational work %

Computer games % Music %

Other (please specify) %

Y
E
V
R
U
S

PC Action

GAMES

How many PC games do you own? _____

On average, how many games do you buy in a year?

◇ Less than 5 ◇ 5-10 ◇ 10-15 ◇ More than 15

On a scale of 1-5 what type of game do you prefer?
(1=very little; 5=very much)

	1	2	3	4	5
Flight	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
Sport	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
Role play	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
Arcade	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
Adventure	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
Other (please specify)	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇

What influences your decision to purchase a game?

- ◇ Reviews seen in magazines ◇ Games charts
 ◇ Television advertising ◇ Game subject
 ◇ Recommendation from third party
 ◇ Games packaging

From what kind of outlets do you buy your games?

- ◇ Mail Order ◇ Local shops ◇ Large multiples

READING HABITS

What PC magazines do you read regularly?

Indicate what you would like to see more or less of in PC Action

	More	Less		More	Less
The Word	◇	◇	CD Word	◇	◇
Benchtest	◇	◇	Workshop	◇	◇
Features	◇	◇	Outline	◇	◇
The Surgery	◇	◇	Archive	◇	◇
Catalog	◇	◇	Competitions	◇	◇

What disks would you prefer to be cover mounted on PC Action?

- ◇ 1 high density disk ◇ 2 double density disks

What other kinds of promotional covermounts (if any) would you like to see on PC Action?

On the scale of 1-5 what has the most influence on your decision to buy a magazine?

	1	2	3	4	5
Cover design	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
Number of cover discs	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
Content of disks	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
Advertising content	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
Glossy cover	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
General page design	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
Covermounted gifts	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
Editorial style	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
It has the news first	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇

Where do you purchase magazines from?

- ◇ Small local newsagents ◇ John Menzies
 ◇ WH Smith ◇ Other (please specify)

Do you have any general comments or suggestions to make on the first issue of PC Action?

Subscribe to PC Action and receive a free game

Do you like what you see in PC Action? Of course you do so here's an opportunity to get each issue sent directly to your home. Not only does a subscription mean that you receive your copy of PC Action before it goes on the news stands but you can also choose from one of our superb FREE games. And if you take advantage of our direct debit facilities, you'll also receive an extra two issues with our compliments!

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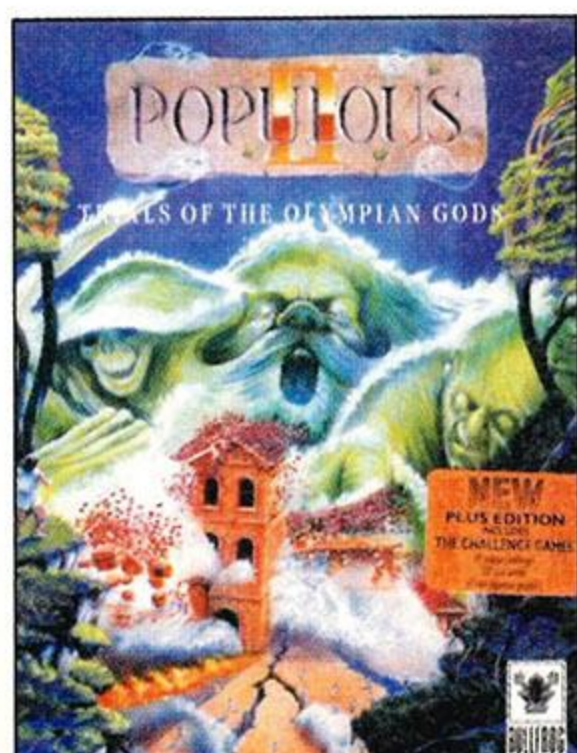
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2. **Police Quest** (Sierra, rrp £39.99)
3. **Space Quest** (Sierra, rrp £39.99)
4. **Ultima 7** (Electronic Arts, rrp £39.99)
5. **Populous 2** (Electronic Arts, rrp £39.99)
6. **PGA Golf Tour Plus** (Electronic Arts, rrp £34.99)
7. **The PC Games Bible** — 320 page book which reviews over 2,000 games

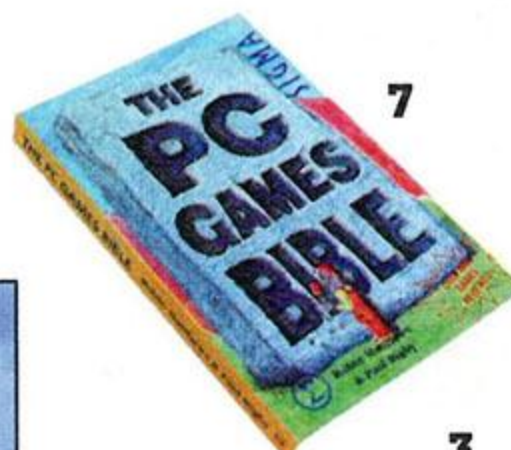
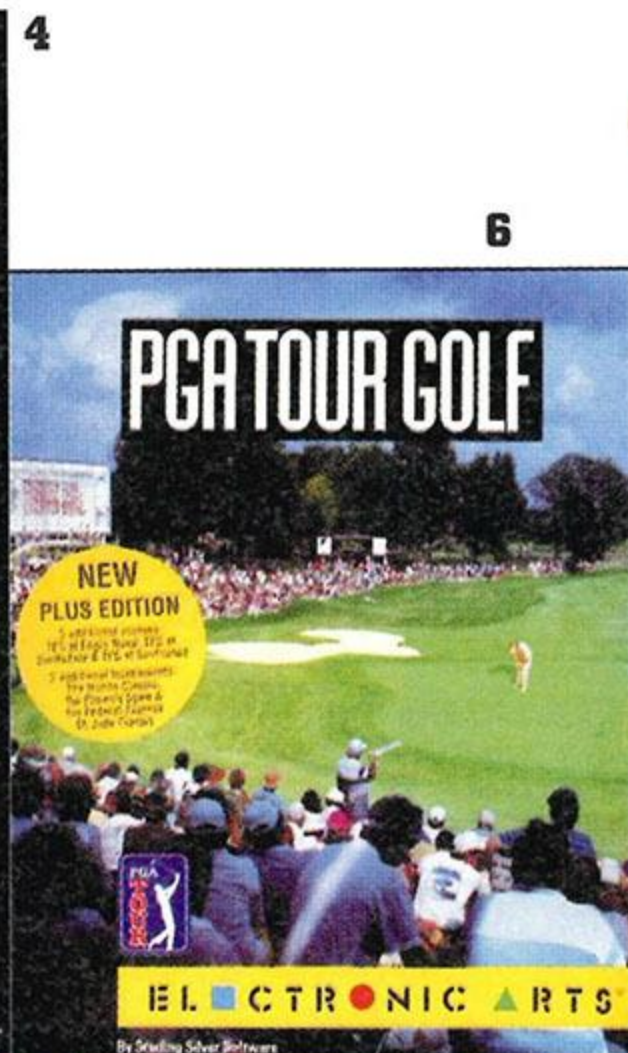
OVERSEAS

Overseas readers will receive all the covermounts and subscription offers available to those in the UK.

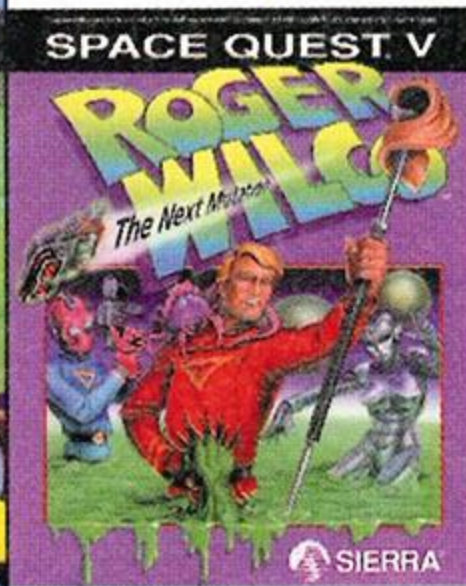
5



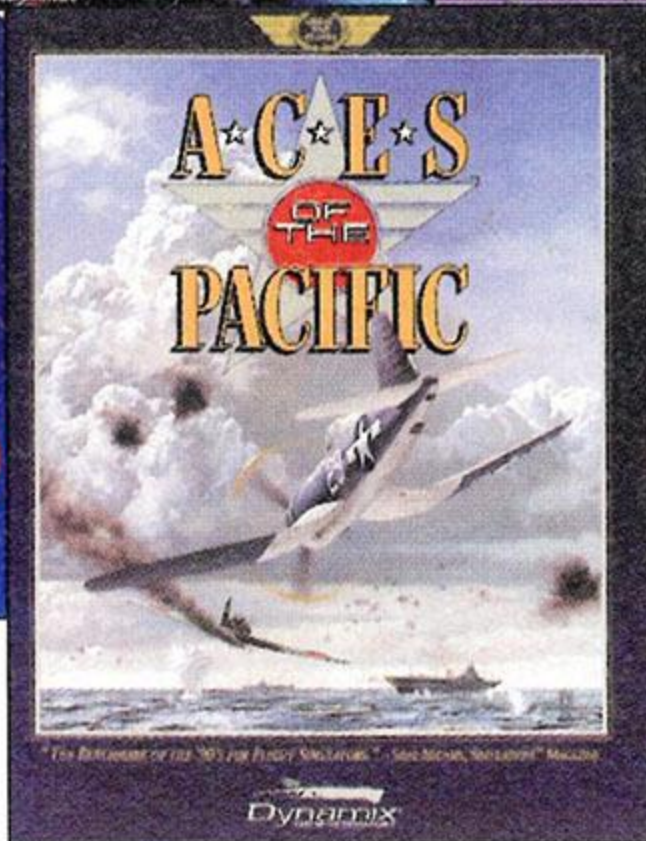
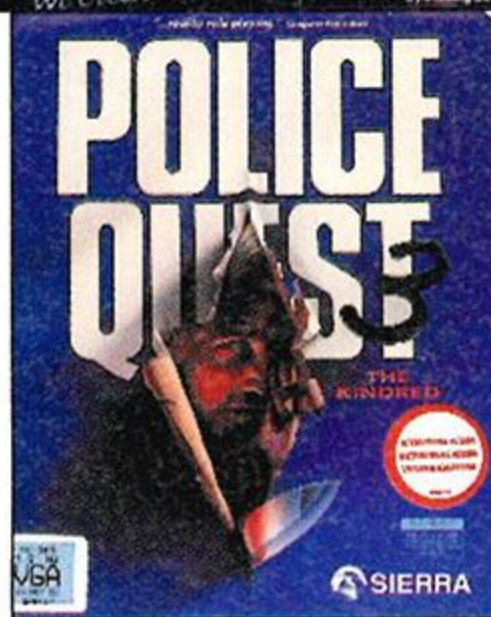
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3



2



1

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Ultra-fast, ultra-smooth and ultra-realistic is what you may expect a flight simulator to be. But just how can you know whether your latest purchase will be a Concorde or a Sopwith Camel? It is in the flight simulation genre that the PC has truly left all other computer formats standing and it now seems apparent that as the PC grows from strength to strength this gulf is widening even further with every new release. So, if you're one of those people who get goosebumps at 30,000ft or an adrenaline burst at Mach .2, PC Action brings you the ultimate compilation of aerial warfare.

1 STRIKE COMMANDER

Graphically and sonically Strike Commander is absolutely incredible, with a plot that is certainly worthy of mention. Taking a well-earned break from the typical military status, you play the leader of a mercenary group who is willing to perform a multitude of strike missions provided the price is right — no questions asked! Detail on terrain and the planes is perfect from camouflaged jets right down to the ornate carvings found on buildings. In between the action there are animated sequences intensifying the atmosphere and providing vital information on your progress within the game. Surely the next step up from this is the real thing?

ELECTRONIC ARTS/ORIGIN



2 X-WING

Although it has taken an immense amount of time for the epic Star Wars movie to be converted into a dedicated computer game the wait seems to have been worthwhile. X-Wing oozes Star Wars and it is obvious that LucasArts have spent a great deal of time on research. Graphically,

X-Wing relies on fairly basic polygon graphics but this doesn't detract from the game at all. It features plenty of missions, each requiring a fair amount of strategy and skill as you blast away at the Empire's Tie Fighters and ultimately the Death Star. X-Wing is a Star Wars fanatic's dream. Now you can make that dream a reality.

US GOLD/LUCASARTS



3 AV-8B HARRIER ASSAULT

Contrary to the Amiga version, AV-8B is one of the smoothest flight simulations we've seen on the PC. Not just a simulator, the game features a fairly complex strategy scenario in which you must control an entire battle operation from the air, sea and the ground. The conflict takes place on the island of East Timor which has been invaded by Indonesian troops. Taking off from the aircraft carrier Tarawa you must direct all strikes against the enemy and then push them into the surrounding sea. Beautifully fast and realistic and an experience not to be missed.

DOMARK

4 SECRET WEAPONS OF THE LUFTWAFFE

The sequel to LucasArts' Their Finest Hour, SWOTL recreates the intense conflicts that took place high above Germany between the US and the Luftwaffe. Featuring the B17, P-51 Mustangs and P-47 Thunderbolt for the US and five of the jet powered Luftwaffe fighters including the Go229A and Me 262. You can participate in one-off missions or engage in a full campaign for supremacy of the skies. The actual plane models are created with bit-mapped graphics which are fairly detailed and very smooth indeed as is the ground detail which is just as intense. The best World War II sim on the PC to date. Additional plane data disks are also available.

US GOLD/LUCASARTS



5 FALCON 3.0

Falcon really set the standard for flight simulations on the PC and although it has now been superseded it still holds a special place in the heart of the PC market. Based on the F-16 Fighting Falcon, the action takes place over three scenarios — Kuwait, Israel and Panama and it is you who must plan and coordinate strike missions against designated targets within these locations. It's a pleasure to find intelligent wingmen in a flight sim who can work on their own initiative and not get shot down within the first minute. Falcon 3.0 is attractive looking and plays very well. A great simulation of a great fighter plane.

MICROPROSE



6 B17 FLYING FORTRESS

How on earth could anyone simulate a World War II bomber with a crew of 10 men? Not an easy task by any standards but Microprose managed to pull it off and with great success. Combining all the essential ingredients associated with a great simulator, B-17 also contains plenty of strategy as you struggle to not only direct your bomber to the target but also maintain your crew's morale and performance. Attention to detail is extremely high, and special effects such as the streams of billowing smoke that trail from a damaged engine add to the intense excitement. Definitely the premiere bomber sim available on the PC.

MICROPROSE



7 REACH FOR THE SKIES

Take to the skies as the RAF or Luftwaffe and battle it out for supremacy over southern England in this very realistic Battle of Britain simulation. Intense excitement and realism with the ability to play the British or the Germans in fighters or bombers through the entire campaign. The graphics are rather bland, but a great theme.

VIRGIN



8 TORNADO

Simulating the RAF Tornado and all that goes with it, the game of the same name features extremely low flying at high speed. The ground detail is fairly basic but this is to maintain the speed of flying at low altitudes. A

comprehensive manual and complex keyboard sheet make this one for the thinkers and not the shooters.

DIGITAL INTEGRATION



9 WING COMMANDER II

Not the most original of scenarios, but Wing Commander's incredible bit-mapped graphics and amazing raytraced animated sequences make it a feast for the eyes. The basic plot consists of killing the Kilrathi enemy and while it may sound pretty dull the frantic action keeps you coming back for more.

ELECTRONIC ARTS

10 ACES OF THE PACIFIC

Set much in the same mould as Reach For The Skies, Aces allows you to take part in the intense battles that took place above the Pacific Ocean between the Japanese and US in around 1942 which ended in the eventual destruction of the entire Japanese fleet. Great attention to detail but even on a 386 it is fairly slow.

SIERRA



11 GUNSHIP 2000

Sticking with Microprose's seemingly insistent stance on basic graphics, Gunship 2000 looks incredibly tame compared to Comanche, but it is the wealth of helicopters and different in-depth missions you can participate in that keep its head above water. An exciting game but let's see some more advanced graphics!

MICROPROSE

12 DOGFIGHT

Taking a new and quite novel approach to flight simulation, DogFight contains planes from World War I to present day which you can play against each other. Imagine an F-16 Fighting Falcon against a Sopwith Camel – you may be shocked at the outcome. Fairly interesting but bland and sparsely detailed graphics reduce its appeal.

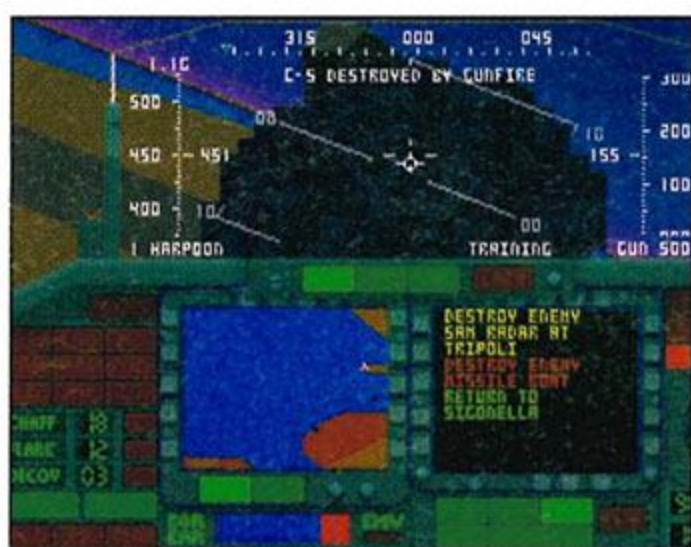
MICROPROSE



13 F-117A NIGHTHAWK

Simulating the most advanced stealth bomber can't be an easy task but Microprose seem to have confidently recreated the secrecy of the F-117A. Different levels of difficulty make it a challenge for even the most hardened pilots. However, like previous releases it suffers from Microprose's lacklustre graphics.

MICROPROSE



14 MIG-29M SUPER FULCRUM

The saving grace of this product is its immense speed and user-friendly strategy scenario. MiG-29M is incredibly fast, and the update smooth and consistent. External graphics could have been a little more engrossing but as this game is now part of a compilation it makes for a very reasonable purchase.

DOMARK

15 THUNDERHAWK

Not so much a simulator, Thunderhawk is based around a fictional helicopter that is lacking

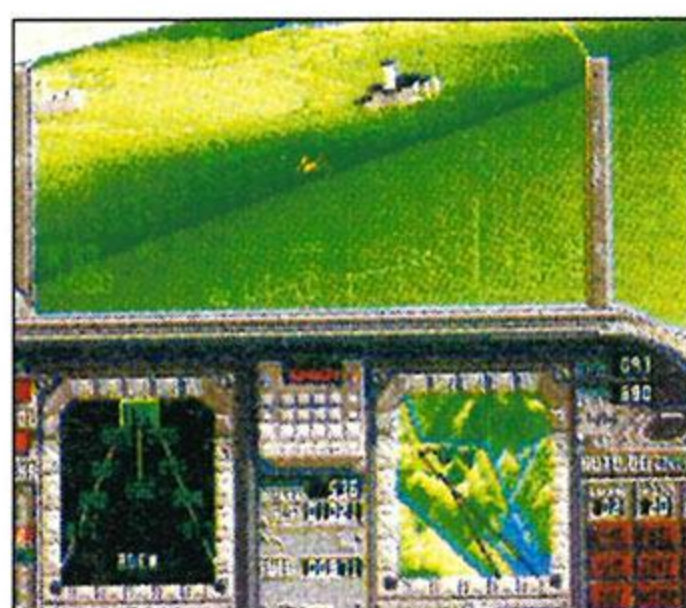
a tail rotor. The action is fast and smooth and although it is not simulating a historically accurate 'copter it is still great fun to play. If only Comanche had the mission depth found in Thunderhawk.

CORE DESIGN

16 HARRIER JUMP JET

The only saving grace for Harrier Jump Jet is the lavish Gouraud shading that adorns the play area. Unfortunately, the down side of this graphical extravaganza is its effect on the speed of the game. The action slows down to snail pace at times and finding targets can prove really frustrating. An opportunity sadly missed.

MICROPROSE



17 F-15 STRIKE EAGLE III

The Strike Eagle has really taken a battering from Microprose and seems to have more of an affinity with the Rocky and Jaws movies! Part III has been considerably updated but only in the graphics department. Gameplay seems to have been left out to rot and is basically no different than its predecessors.

MICROPROSE

18 HEROES OF THE 357TH

More World War II action this time over the skies of France during the later part of the war. Much in the style of Chuck Yeager who actually flew with this particular squadron. Heroes of the 357th is fast but not very detailed and the combat sections are very tough indeed. Fairly average really.

ELECTRONIC ARTS

19 COMANCHE – MAXIMUM OVERKILL

Comanche, the first game to implement Voxel graphics is an absolute treat to look at, but the missions are incredibly dull and lacking in imagination. This severely reduces the game's

longevity offering a play time of approximately 10 hours. A mission disk is available but this doesn't improve gameplay at all. A good show piece.

US GOLD

20 SHUTTLE

Not a military simulation but a simulation all the same, Virgin's Shuttle is probably the most realistic sim ever! However, total realism brings with it a plethora of keys and a manual like War and Peace. We would recommend this game only to die-hard fans of the purest form of simulation.

VIRGIN



21 ATAC

ATAC is pretty much split 50/50 between strategy and simulation, but the mix is well balanced. Controlling jets and helicopters in a scenario straight out of Miami Vice, you must take out a drug baron before he can take over the world! An excellent idea which is well implemented but marred by poor controls and a very suspect 3D system.

MICROPROSE



22 BIRDS OF PREY

An incredibly ambitious product that was too over-ambitious for its own good. Fly over 40 different planes from fighters to Jumbo Jets in this real-time battle game. Unfortunately, due to the real-time movement of planes the action is slow and jerky and there is a definite lack of excitement.

ELECTRONIC ARTS

catalog



EVERY MONTH PC ACTION WILL BE OFFERING YOU THE LATEST CONTACTS WITHIN THE PC WORLD. EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW FROM PD TO BBS, VIRUSES TO GAMES, CAN BE FOUND HERE ACCOMPANIED BY CONTACT NAMES AND PHONE NUMBERS. THE INFORMATION WILL BE UPDATED EVERY MONTH TO ALLOW YOU TO KEEP AHEAD IN THE EVER EVOLVING WORLD OF THE PC.

public domain (p.d.)

Welcome to the world of PD, a world in which utilities, applications, demos and games are available at an affordable price. PD disks vary in price from just £1 to £10. For a full list of available PD and shareware software contact these companies:

Advantage	0242 224340
Argent Shareware	0603 812888
Benetech Systems	0533 611231
Classic Software	0472 359957
CMB Software	0388 662875
Data Soft	031 2282153
D & E Software Services	0703 634120
Diamond Int. Shareware	021 5588958
	021 5556886
EC Software	0484 460070
Ensign Systems	081 7782871
	081 7768477
Global trading	041 2484487
Joint Venture	0268 754522
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Kingsway Computer Serv.	0742 750623
LibraSoft	0274 734594
Links PD & Shareware	0706 360676
Magnetic Fields	0706 360676
Metric Computers	0705 827943
Nildram Software	0442 890303
Omicron Systems	0702 710391
PCIUG	0732 771512
PCL Software Ltd	0332 678713
PDSL	0892 663298
Precision Software Apps.	0223 20828
PSA	0223 208288
PSP	0223 208288
Red Dragon	0745 338094
Shareware Connections	0417 751937
Shareware Elite	0326 564164
Shareware Marketing	0297 24088
Sheffield Library	0742 464561
SpringSoft	0352 770049
SMS Shareware	0276 681864
TestWare	0423 886415
The Disk Park	0525 841731
Transcend Services Ltd	0274 622228
WiseOwl Software	0235 529808

bulletin board systems (bbs)

BBS systems offer an incredible amount of free software for the price of a call. But be expected to upload software in order to download and maybe pay a membership fee.

CIX	081 399 5252
	081 390 1244
(Tricom Modems)	081 390 9787

(Hayes Ultra 96s)	081 390 1255
(Courier HSTs)	
Information	081 390 8446
CompuServe	
London	071 490 8881
(300/1200/2400/9600 bps)	
Birmingham	021 633 3474
(300/1200/2400 bps)	
Manchester	061 834 5533
(300/1200/2400 bps)	
Glasgow	041 204 1722
(300/1200/2400 bps)	
Cardiff	0222 344 184
(300/1200/2400 bps)	
Information	0800 289 378
Enterprise Info Sys.	081 951 5849
(HST)	081 951 5212
(V32bis)	081 952 7719
(V22/MNP5)	
Information	081 952 7513
Metric Computers	0705 871471
Microland BBS	0483 725 905
(View)	0891 990 505
(Download)	
V32bis, V32, V22bis, V22, V23 &	
HST. 8 Data Bits & No Parity	
Online Now	0839 661 188
	0839 661 199
(300/1200/240bps)	
Shareware Support	0442 891109

top three shareware games

The PD and shareware scene is certainly packed with excellent demos, games, utilities and applications. These are the three most enjoyable games out on the market at the moment:

- 1. CD-Man**
This comes across as an excellent Pac-Man conversion that's infinitely better than the original. Plenty of different levels and new graphics.
- 2. Commander Keen**
Definitely the best shareware platform game on the market in which you play a teenage hero stranded on the planet Mars who must escape back home.
- 3. Wolfenstein 3D**
Although it has a fairly sensitive plot (killing Nazis for example), Wolfenstein still remains an all time favourites. Great graphics and atmosphere.

the virus threat

Viruses are lethal program files that infect disks and damage their content, then transfer themselves onto other

disks. To keep your disks and system virus free, it is a good idea to use one of these commercial and shareware virus killers.

commercial virus killers

- 1. All Safe**
X-Tree (Software Paradise) 0222 887521
£79
- 2. Anti-Virus Assist**
Technocom 0753 534900
£1,595
- 3. Anti-Virus Plus**
Menhorah Software 081 8834269
£79
- 4. Anti-Virus Toolkit DOS**
S & S 0442 877877
£99
- 5. Anti-Virus Toolkit Windows**
S & S 0442 877877
£125

shareware virus killers

- 1. McAfee Virus Scan**
PDSL (Code 3531) 0892 663298
3.5inch £4.95
5.25inch £5.15
- 2. McAfee Net Virus Tools**
PDSL (Code 3532) 0892 663298
3.5inch £4.95
5.25inch £5.15
- 3. Integrity Master**
PDSL (Code 3486) 0892 663298
3.5inch £4.95
5.25inch £5.15
- 4. SysGuard**
PDSL (Code 3565) 0892 663298
3.5inch £4.95
5.25inch £5.15
- 5. F-PROT**
PDSL (Code 3565) 0892 663298
3.5inch £4.95
5.25inch £5.15

applications & peripherals

The PC is a powerful machine and its major strength lies in its application and hardware prowess. If it's wordprocessors, spreadsheets, art packages and various other serious software items that you require, or even the latest printers, CD ROM drives, mice and other peripherals, you'll find all the best here...

best word processor

WordPerfect 6.0
WordPerfect Corporation 0932 850500
£329

best office workstation

Microsoft Office Professional 3.0
Microsoft 0734 270000
£745
Contains;
Wordprocessor: Word 2.0
Database: Access 1.1
Spreadsheet: Excell 4.0
Graphics Presentation: Powerpoint 3.0
Electronic Mail (E-Mail): Mail 3.2

best graphics package

CorelDRAW! 4.0
Corel 0101 613 7283733
£295 or £169 upgrade

best mouse controller

Microsoft Mouse v2.0
Microsoft 0734 270000
£79 - bus
£69 - serial

best cd rom drive

NEC CDR 38 External
NEC 081 9938111
£285
Transfer Rate 300Kb/s
Access Time 400ms

best multimedia presentation

Freelance Graphics (Windows 2.0)
Lotus Development Corporation
0784 455445
£415

best laserjet printer

Hewlett-Packard LaserJet 4
Hewlett-Packard 0344 360000
£1,449

best inkjet printer

Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 510
P&P 0706 832832
£329

best greyscale hand scanner

Logitech 256
Crown Computer Supplies 0704 895815
£175

best colour hand scanner

Logitech Scanman Color
Mediaware 0344 891313
£289

best journey planner

Autoroute Plus 6.01
Next Base 0784 421422
£395 or £85 upgrade

joysticks

One of the most enjoyable pastimes for PC owners is playing games, but it's a common known fact that frustration can creep in when your joystick has severe problems keeping up with your gameplaying skills. That's why it is so important to have the best and where else to find the best...

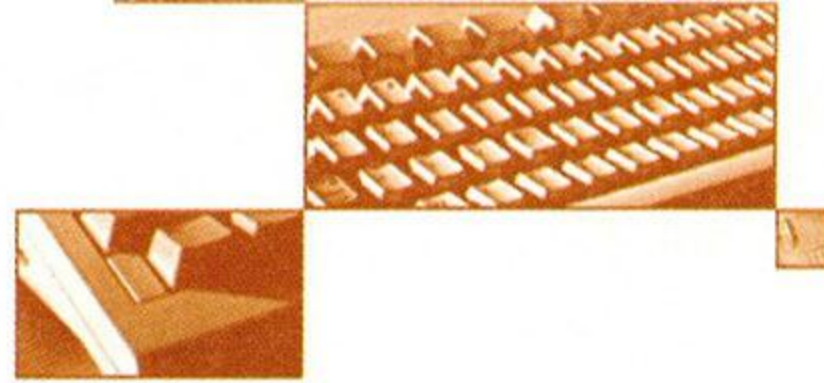
1. Speedking
Konix 0495 350101
£14.99
Analog & Digital (Digital with adaptor)

2. The Bug
Cheetah 0222 867777
£14.99

3. Gravis Analog Pro
SpectraVideo 081 9000024
£59.99

4. Thunder Stick
Kraft/VizTrade 0444 239999
£39.99

catalog



5. Free Wheel

Logic 3/SpectraVideo 081 9000024
£34.99

6. Digital-to-Analog Adaptor

EuroMax 0262 601006
£15.99

the hit list

If you feel you need to contact a software house for either product information, a complaint or perhaps even praise, then simply check out the list below for the latest numbers.

Companies in brackets are ones whose products are being distributed by the company whose number they are under. Tell them how you feel.

Accolade 081 8770880
Addictive 081 8048100
Alternative 0977 797777
Beau Jolly 0737 222003
Codemasters 0926 814132
Core Design 0332 297797
CP Software 0993 823463
D&H Games 0462 816103
Daze Marketing 071 3282762
(Silmarils)
Digital Integration 0276 684959
(Coktel Vision)
(Loriciels)
Domark 081 7802222
Electronic Arts 0753 549442
(360)
(Broderbund)
(Interplay)
(Millennium)
(Mindcraft)
(Origin)

(SSG)

Entertainment Int. 0268 541126

(Empire)

(ReadySoft)

Europress Software 0625 859333

Impressions 071 3512133

Infogrames 071 7388199

(Disney Software)

Kompart UK Ltd 0727 868005

(Blue Byte)

(Colorado Technologies)

(Internecine)

(Oxford Softworks)

(Storm Computers)

Konami 081 4292446

MicroProse 0454 329510

Microvalue 0661 860260

(Flair Software)

Mindscape 0444 246333

Mirage 0260 299909

(CyberDreams)

Ocean 061 8326633

Psygnosis 051 7095755

Renegade 071 7023643

Sierra On-Line 0734 303171

(Dynamix)

The Software Business 0480 496497

Sales Curve 071 5853308

(Storm)

Titus 071 7002119

Ubi Soft 081 3439055

US Gold 021 6253366

(Access)

(Delphine)

(SSI)

(LucasFilms)

(NovaLogic)

(New World Computing)

Virgin Games 081 9602255

Zeppelin 091 3857755

LucasArts

LucasArts

Maxis

Maxis

Maxis

Merit

Merit

MicroProse

MicroProse

MicroProse

MicroProse

MicroProse

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X-Wing

X-Wing

A-Train

Sim Earth

SimLife

Maelstrom

Tom Landry Strategy Football

B17 Flying Fortress

Civilisation

Command HQ

Darklands

F-15 III

F117A Stealth Fighter

Formula 1 Grand Prix

Global Conquest

Gunship 2000

Gunship 2000 Islands & Ice

Harrier Jump Jet

Knights of the Sky

Pirates Gold!

Rex Nebular

Silent Service II

Task Force 1942

UMS 2

UMS 2 Planet Editor

Ambush at Sorinor

Magic Candle II

Magic Candle III

Rules of Engagement

Siege

Star Legions

Tegel's Mercenaries

Might & Magic 4-Clouds of Xeen

Comanche: Maximum Overkill

Rules of Engagement 2

Ultima Underworld

Ultima Underworld II

Ultima VII

Wing Commander: Special Ops I

Mantis

MegaTraveller II

Twilight 2000

Island of Dr Brain

Mixed Up Mother Goose MPC

Police Quest I

Police Quest III

Quest for Glory I

Quest for Glory III

Space Quest IV

Space Quest V

Willy Beamish

Crusaders of the Dark Savant

Crisis in the Kremlin

Falcon 3.0

Operation Fighting Tiger

Tank

Dark Queen of Krynn

Eye of the Beholder II

Great Naval Battles

Pacific War

Prophecy of the Shadow

Spelljammer

Tony Larussa 2

Tony Larussa Fantasy Manager

Ultimate Baseball

Unlimited Adventures

Harpoon

Harpoon (386 Version)

MegaFortress

Patriot

V for Victory

JetFighter II

Deluxe Scrabble

Dune II

The Seventh Guest

Empire Deluxe

The Perfect General

The Perfect General

The Perfect General

The Perfect General

The Perfect General

The Perfect General

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1.02

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1.1

1.03

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3.1

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1.02

Roland soundcard Fix

SoundCard I/O Fix

General Fix

Install routine Fix

General Fix

The last word...

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DARYL GATES CONTROVERSIAL COP SURROUNDING THE RODNEY KING AFFAIR

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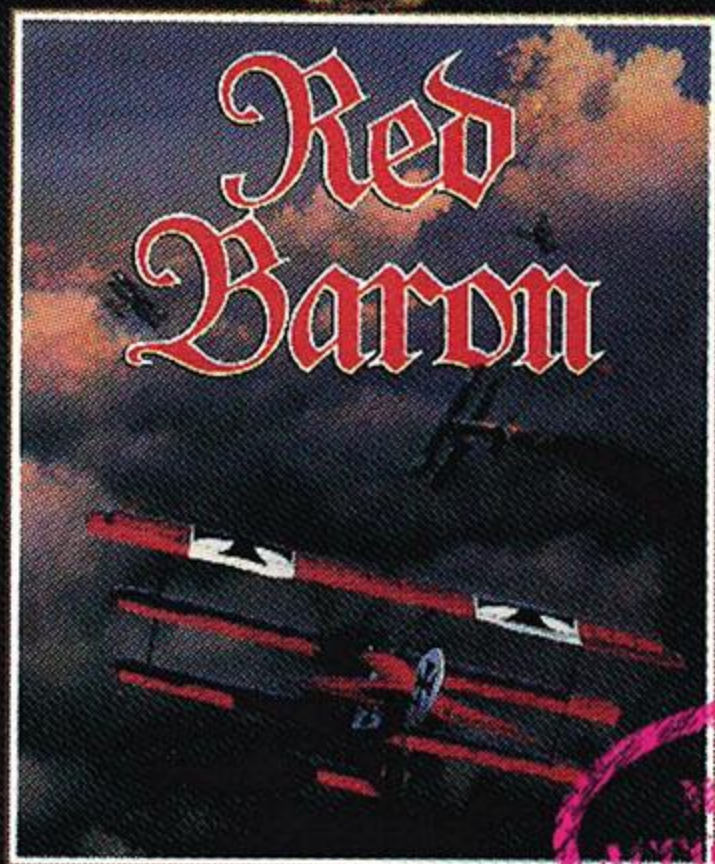
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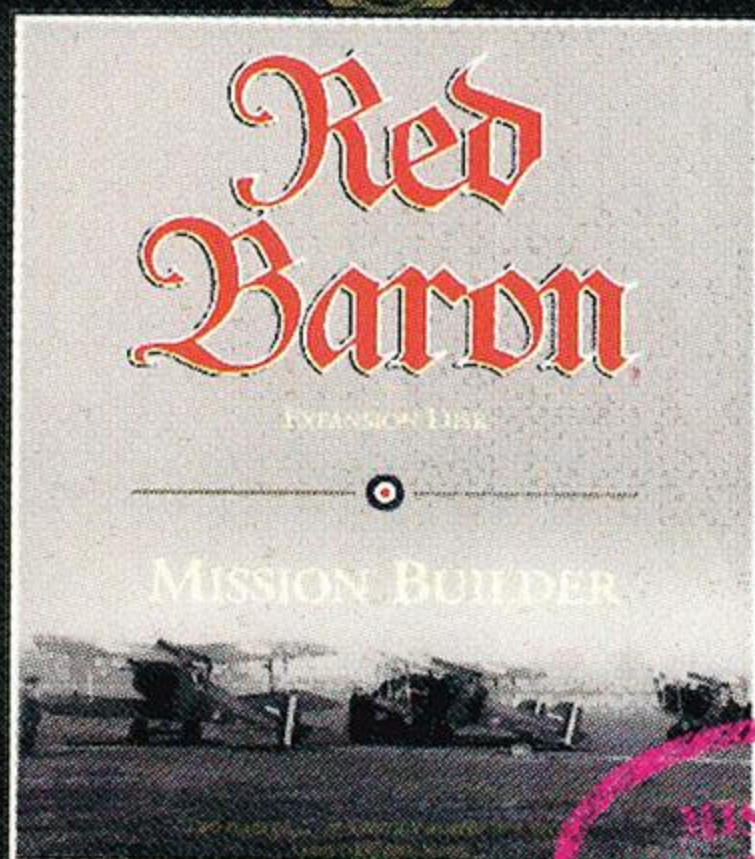
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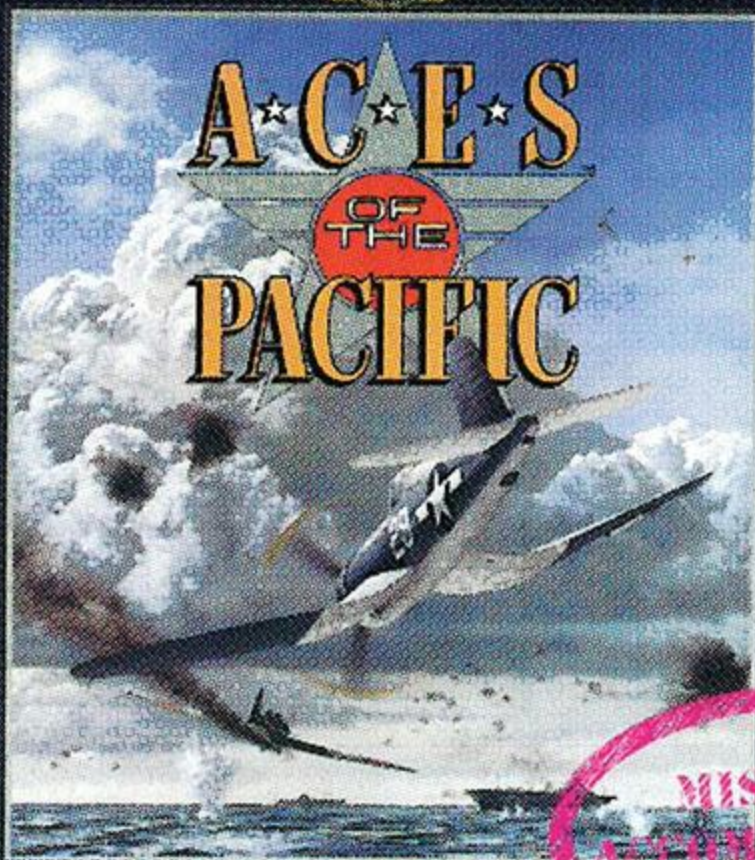
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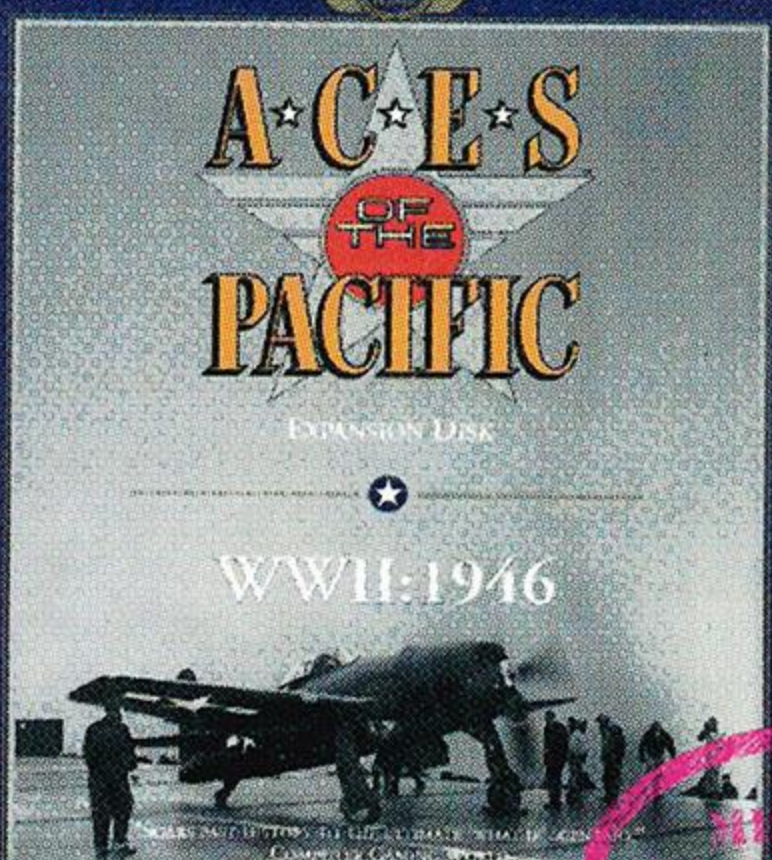
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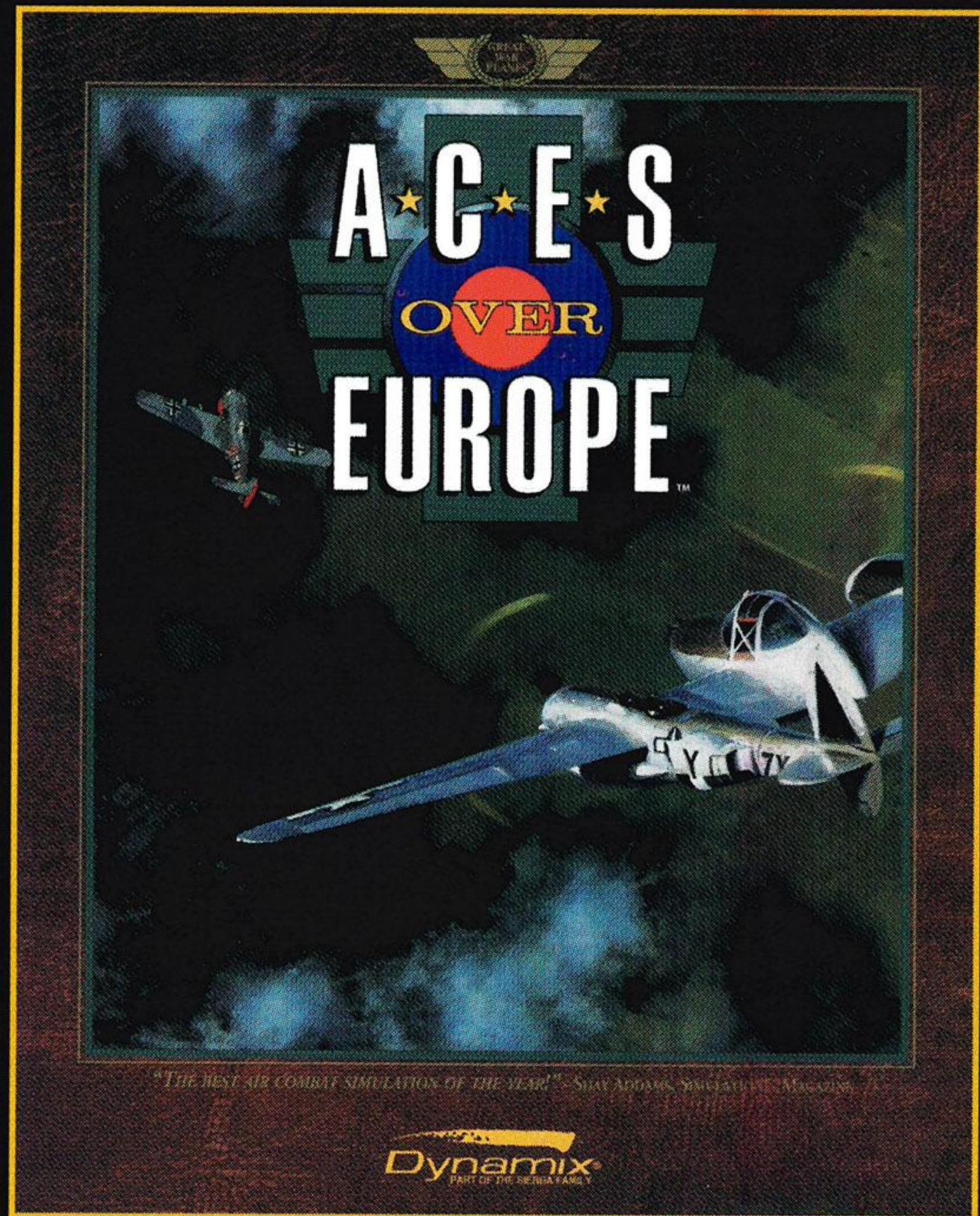
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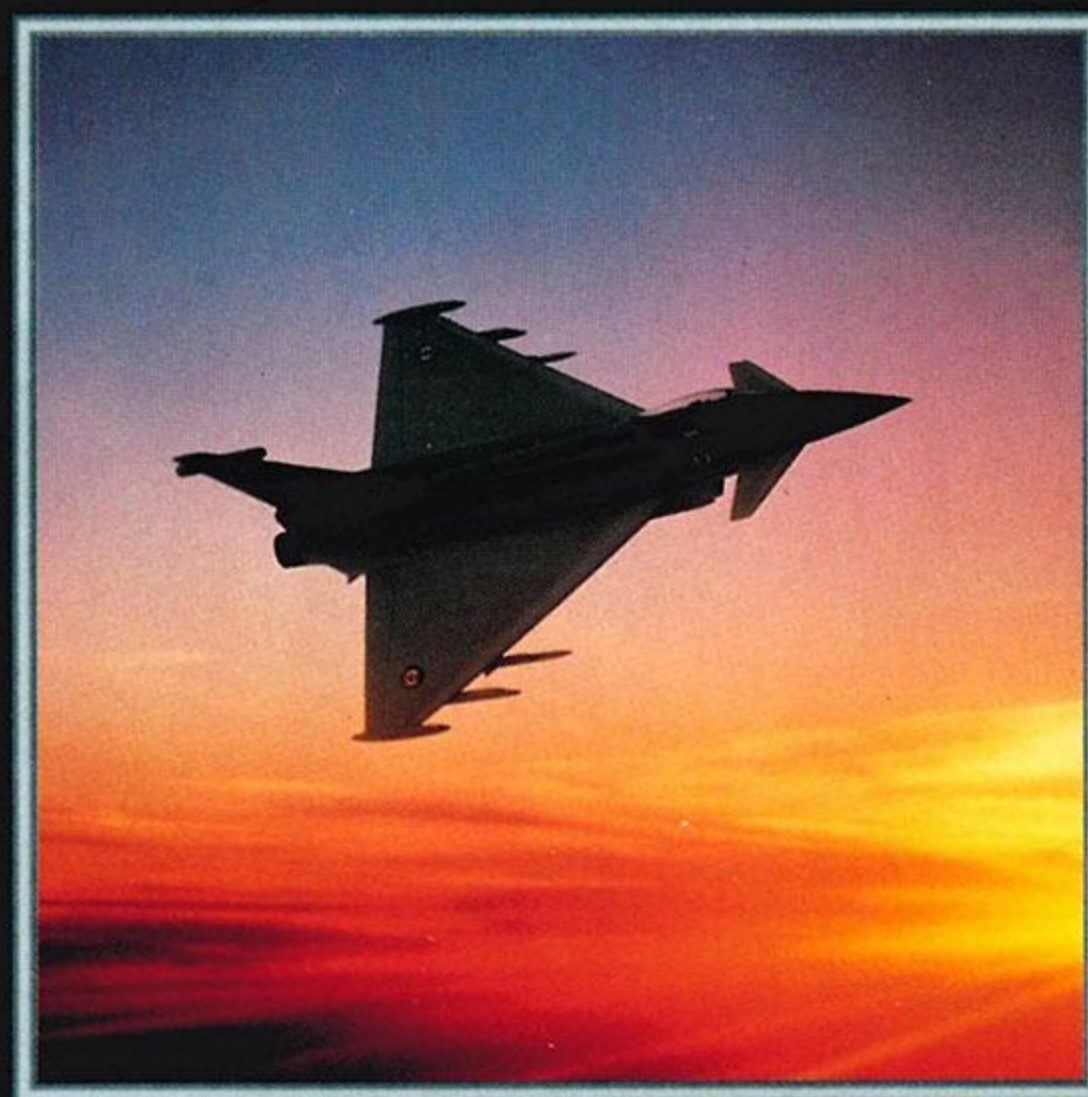
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Dear Advertisers,

Well here it is. After many months of market research and planning followed by two months of writing and production, the launch issue of PC Action is ready to hit the news stands on October 28.

We're thrilled with it and are sure that you'll share our enthusiasm.

Catering for the more sophisticated needs of the PC market, we have pitched PC Action at readers of 25 and upwards — a decision which is reflected in the high standard of the writing, content and design.

Balance is what PC Action is all about. It has a clean look but is packed with information. It goes into informed depth but is still easy to read. It uses slick humour but never sinks to toilet level. In short, it's a sophisticated product which is bang on target for the discriminating market it serves.

And PC Action promises even more with its Christmas issue, due out on November 25. We'll tell you why controversial cop Daryl Gates (remember the Rodney King affair?) is writing a computer game. We'll take a closer look at the synergy between many new games and the glitter of Hollywood. We'll propel you on an exciting page by page trip through the latest releases; give you "The Word" on all the PC games news, put new projects under the Workshop microscope and so much more.

Well, enough of me waxing lyrical. Open this copy of PC Action and see for yourselves. And if you want to be part of it all, ring either myself or Leila Caston on 0625 878888.

Yours sincerely

Fiona Carey
Advertising Manager

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